the weekly Standard

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PLUS

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Correctamundo

The Howell Raines-era *New York Times* accelerated its reputational tailspin last Thursday when 27-year-old national desk correspondent Jayson Blair abruptly resigned from the paper amidst a mini-uproar over apparently faked reporting and plagiarism. Immediately at issue was Blair's April 26 front page story on the family of Army mechanic Edward Anguiano, killed in action during the liberation of Iraq: Specialist Anguiano's mother said Blair had never visited her home or talked to her on the phone, though his *Times* story described the place and quoted her in detail. How could this be? As the editor of the *San Antonio Express-News* complained, much of Blair's material had been lifted from a recently published piece by *Express-News* reporter Macarena Hernandez.

But wait, there may be more. Ominously enough, the *Times* itself, reporting on the matter in last Friday's edition, quotes a promise from executive editor Raines that he is "also reviewing other journalistic work [Jayson Blair] has done for the *Times*," and "we will do what is necessary to be sure the record is kept straight." According to *Washington Post* media correspondent Howie Kurtz, there'll be a lot of work involved in such a review: Blair has been involved in a number of previous controversies "and the paper has run 50 corrections on his stories."

Which is an interesting little statistic. We suspect our first reaction was the same as any disinterested scholar of American journalistic institutions: "Whoa! How many stories do you get to screw up at the *Times* and still keep your job?" Our second reaction was, let's fire up the Nexis database and find out.

Since Blair's name first appeared in the *Times* on June 9, 1998, he has had 725 total bylines there. His 50 corrections therefore constitute a 6.9 percent discovered-error rate. That's not so great. But it's not nearly so bad as the factual strikeout average posted, to take one random example, by *Times* Washington-bureau stalwart Adam Clymer over the exact same period: 400 bylines with 36 corrections (9.0 percent). Or how's about *Times* associate editor R.W. "Johnny" Apple Jr., whose 327 bylines with 46 corrections (14.1 percent spoiled copy) would seem to label him—the numbers don't lie—less than half as reliable a newsman as the hapless youngster Howell Raines is now banishing to Purdah.

At the risk of revealing embarrassing details of THE SCRAPBOOK's obsessions, we'll admit that we ran columnist Maureen Dowd's numbers so you can save yourself the trouble: a spectacular record of one correction in the last nine years (which this page certainly can't match). We'll leave to the cynics jokes about how you first have to deal in facts to make errors of the sort that need correcting. ♦

How Much Loot?

About the looting of Iraq's National Museum: The *New York Times* last week reported that estimates of the catastrophe have been ratcheted down considerably. To review the bidding: John F. Burns, in a rather breathless lead paragraph, reported on April 12 that when "American troops entered Baghdad in sufficient force to topple Saddam Hussein's government this week, it took only 48 hours for the museum to be destroyed, with at least 170,000 artifacts carried away by looters."

That's more than 3,500 artifacts an hour—an astonishing rate of theft that probably should have been flagged by a copy editor. But the 170,000 figure (which seems to have been a guess at the total holdings) has since been repeated in hundreds of stories, most of them hysterically anti-U.S. military. Burns's piece, to be fair, went on to caution that "what officials told journalists today may have to be adjusted as a fuller picture comes to light."

And how! Alan Riding's front page piece in the *Times* last Thursday reports that museum officials have now provided American investigators with a list of "artifacts that were definitely missing." The list contains (this is not a misprint) 29 items. Four have subsequently been found. "Twenty-five pieces is not the same as 170,000," the investigating Marine colonel, Matthew F. Bogdanos, dryly notes. Bogdanos's day job, when he's not doing reserve duty, is as a prosecutor in the Manhattan D.A.'s office.

Much uncertainty remains, but the difference between 170,000 and 25, as Mark Twain might have put it, is like the difference between lightning and a lightning bug. ♦

Grad Students of the World, Disband!

Last week graduate students at Yale University voted against unionization in a referendum rigged to give pro-union advocates more firepower in their dealings with the university. The Graduate Employees & Students Organization (GESO) arranged a vote on short

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notice during exam week, crafted their own list of eligible voters, and opened a single polling place for business hours only in a location inconvenient for science and engineering students, who tend to be anti-union. Despite careful planning, and numerous statements treating the vote as a done deed, the referendum was defeated 694 to 651.

How could this have happened? Irritated by 14 years of pestering by determined unionizers, two anti-union forces have emerged on campus. GASO is an "unorganized collection of rogue students" who oppose GESO's goal and tactics. At What Cost? is one of many organizations bearing the same name that have sprung up at private universities with union movements. Both favor posters with clever slogans as their primary form of advocacy. The best one mocks the "plight" of the typical non-union grad student:

Free Tuition	**$100,000**
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There are some labor strikes that make a lot of sense. But not this one.

In recent years, graduate students at Brown, Columbia, and the University of Pennsylvania have voted on unionization, and results are pending rulings by the National Labor Relations Board in response to university appeals. Cornell University graduate students defeated a referendum on unionization last October. New York University is currently the only private university with a graduate student union. ♦

Hamming It Up

Our friends at PETA, the animal rights group, having failed in their attempt to get Hamburg, N.Y., to change its name to Veggieburg, tried again with Hamburg, Penn., and were—can you believe it?—refused again. Spokesman Joe Haptas told AP, "This campaign is a bit tongue-in-cheek because we don't expect anybody to accept, but the offer is serious."

Well, in the same vein (sorry!), and because we take PETA seriously, we have proposals for other name changes the group should add to its PR campaign.

Hamsters: Veggiesters. It's a no-brainer. Hamsters are vegetarians, except when they eat their young.

The Hamptons: The Veggietons. The foie gras will be made of tofu.

New Hampshire: New Veggieshire. New motto: Live meat-free, or die.

Hampers: Veggieers. Yes, it's an awkward neologism, but what do you want—simplicity and an evil, meat-inspired name, or a tough-to-pronounce (but meat-free!) dirty laundry container?

Alexander Hamilton: Alexander Veggieton. Can't have one of our Founding Fathers keep a meat-filled name.

But there's one name that needs no changing at all. It's a perfect name for a vegetarian nation. We await PETA's recognition of its good fortune in having a Bush in the White House. ♦

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Casual

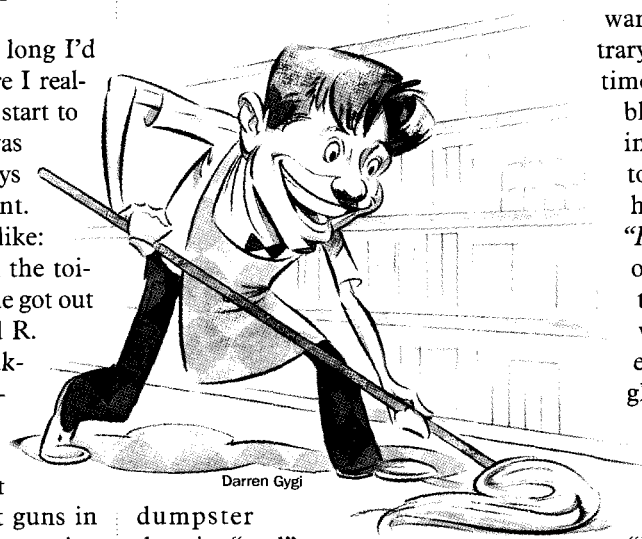
Swab Story

For certain self-important novelists and CEOs, the blue-collar biography has been a staple affectation for decades. Before writing his unreadable novel or founding his unscrupulous corporation, Joe Blow, the dust jacket or business-magazine profile tells us, "worked as a private detective, a truck-driver, a canner at several Alaskan fisheries, and a shepherd in the Uinta mountains."

It shames me to say how long I'd been reading such bios before I realized they were baloney from start to finish. The clear giveaway was that the jobs listed were always picturesque and independent. You never read descriptions like: "Steve van Novelist cleaned the toilets in a shopping mall after he got out of high school." Or "Gerald R. Boss-Feller spent 14 years taking out the garbage in a barber shop." The variety of jobs was fishy, too. Real working-class people don't just hang up their grommet guns in Syracuse because they want to enjoy the clean air in Utah for six weeks. What these biographies ultimately say is that the subject had interesting "work experiences" (as opposed to *jobs*) between terms at Princeton.

What rescued me from this temptation to self-aggrandizement was the towering crumminess of my early jobs. I mopped the aisles and stuffed the dumpsters at a Star Market in Massachusetts for $2.65 an hour. I did not feel I needed the dough. My father used to tell me when I was a kid that if he ever struck it rich, he wouldn't tell me. The lesson he meant to convey went way over my head, but the statement I never forgot. Thenceforth, I assumed that our never taking vacations and handing down our clothes and always getting a doggie bag at restaurants were all part of some J.P. Getty-traveling-incognito shtick my dad had.

Maybe I needed the dough more than I realized. It's only now that I consider that if my dad had happened to strike it *poor* in those years, he wouldn't have told me that, either. And everyone seemed to be striking it poor in 1978. That was what gave dumpster duty its "real" working-class flavor. There were men at the Star working overtime to support families on not much more than I made. They were petrified of losing their jobs. What's more, there were many stigmata of low-wage labor still omnipresent in the 1970s that kids of my background even five years younger have seen only in museums. We punched timecards, and they were authoritative; my pay may have been described by the hour, but it was computed by the minute ($31.76 for 11.983 hours). There was the *hop-to-it* 15-minute coffee break (for which one got paid) and on certain shifts a 30-minute dinner break (for which one did not). There was the shift manager, and the bright red apron that said "Star Market" across the front. It was, to put it mildly, not the article that gave rise to the saying *I love a man in a uniform*.


Darren Gygi

I was the lackey in the Star hierarchy. My job was to stand in slimy solitude on the freezing, rainy loading dock and pile the dumpster with the gamut of garbage a supermarket generates: corrugated cardboard, old signage, chicken and fish carcasses, and lunchroom and bathroom detritus. Once or twice a night I would be summoned into the store proper, and that was to swab. These trips were frequent. Perhaps children threw up in supermarkets more in 1978, perhaps it's that virtually everything then was made of glass, even soft-drink bottles.

The Star Market was not a backward supermarket—on the contrary—but it was living on borrowed time. Supermarkets of 1978 probably resembled those of the Harding administration more than today's. There was the illiterate handmade signage (*Lamchop "Fresh" 2day* 59c), spray-painted onto white foolscap and masking-taped to the windows. There were paper bags (no plastic), vegetable cans of ribbed tin (with glued-on paper labels) that could be stacked only pyramid-style, and a bakery section that had danishes and the local raisin-and-molasses squares known as "hermits" but no fresh bread.

And that job I was in had no more chance of surviving in its 1978 form than the old hunt-and-peck ka-*ching!* cash register or the pickle barrel. Young men would wander in every shift to ask if the store was hiring, and they were indeed willing to bag groceries for $2.65 an hour, but they didn't want *my* job. For good or ill, in the logic of the new economy, my job was meant for someone who had escaped the Khmer Rouge or the civil war in El Salvador. No one had thought to offer it to those people yet. Until that moment came, it was a job so humble that only a slightly privileged kid who was going off to college could afford to take it.

Christopher Caldwell

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Correspondence

Castles on a Cloud

I am Joey Tabula-Rasa from David Brooks's "The Collapse of the Dream Palaces" (April 28). Well, not exactly. I am, however, a young man who had been in search of clarity in these times.

As an artist, I have been surrounded by artists and other members of America's counterculture for as long as I can remember. But never did I subscribe to the reactionary politics of my friends, choosing, rather, to ignore politics altogether.

After witnessing September 11 firsthand in the streets of Manhattan, I became magnetically drawn to world events and history. I found myself completely repulsed by the sentiments of my friends (blame America first) and the spineless reaction by many Americans against the post-9/11 policies of the Bush administration.

Wishing to arm myself against the bloody verbal war I was expecting in my circles (in which I would certainly be outnumbered), I decided to search for more meaningful news coverage than cable provided.

I also set out to fill in the gaps in my knowledge of 20th-century history (which my public education failed to provide). I turned to the man I admire most: my father, a Cold Warrior, and the most intelligent man I have ever had the privilege of knowing. He showed me a world of politics on the Internet I had never imagined. He never forced me into any ideology, allowing me instead to find the voices that spoke to me.

Since then, I have become a daily reader of many sites, including The Daily Standard. I have new heroes, including some that Brooks mentioned: Dennis Miller, Paul Wolfowitz, Charles Krauthammer, George Bush, and many more. I have a tremendous admiration for the men and women who see the United States, however flawed it may be, as the greatest force for good on this planet.

I even find myself to be considering joining the reserves. I am reminded of a quote from one of Hollywood's toughest S.O.B.s—Harvey Keitel: "You cannot be I-Am-Somebody.com, stay home, and let someone else fight your war for you. I don't see how a young man can have an identity that he can respect without being aware that it's necessary for him to stand up and defend the liberties that he cherishes."

Matthew Berinato
New York, NY

David Brooks's "The Collapse of the Dream Palaces" was an extremely interesting read, but I think Brooks has spent a little too much time away from school. Perhaps his dream character, "Joey Tabula-Rasa," does now see the world as Brooks describes it, but I'm not so sure about the average "Joe College." He's the guy who is doing Tequila shooters and beer-bongs before heading out to see *The Real Cancun*. He's not watching the news so much as he is *Girls Gone Wild*. Sure he thinks Bush is cool, but only because he kicked ass. Sadly, though, to Joe College, Clinton is cool too because he got some from that chubby brunette on *Mr. Personality*.

John Hellerman
Washington, DC

I am a kid from the Vietnam era. I stood in those protests. I knew who Henry Cabot Lodge was. I knew what we had promised the French after the Second World War. I heard Johnson decide to fight a "limited war." I saw my friends come home with big pupils and blank eyes from drugs and the horror of killing children and old ladies. But it became very apparent, as the years passed, that the people like the senator from Arizona who I had once mocked had been the only sound voice—fight the war for real or get out. I saw Brooks's "dream palaces."

I heard the promises of programs for a better life and a good education for the poorest of our people from the same groups. And as the years went by, I saw that things never really got much better, but that certain of those people who championed these efforts got rich, became high-profile apologists, and showed up mostly to speak using emotionally motivating words, very few actual arguments, and very little actual fact.

Now I, like your child of 1983, hear the bombast and have little use for it. I too see myself as an Independent. And as for this war, I see the entire experience much as you described this child of the future would see it, despite all the history and political knowledge I might have gleaned over the years.

Funny how far I've come from the day an FBI agent asked for my name and information as I held a placard protesting Dow Chemical and the Vietnam war.

I wonder if there are not many more like me out there who were shaped a little differently over the years and who have much more in common with this new rising generation than anyone might suspect.

Kate Cunningham
Hollywood, CA

I very much enjoyed David Brooks's "The Collapse of the Dream Palaces." In it, however, he credits Fouad Ajami with the phrase "dream palaces." In fact, Ajami's very good book, *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*, credits the original phrasemaker, T.E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia), who coined it in the opening pages of *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*.

Saul Rosenberg
Merrick, NY

A Marine officer during the Vietnam war used to say in jest, "Vietnam, it's not a good war, but it's the only war we've got." If the Iraq war protesters had a well-developed sense of humor they might say today, "The Iraq war, it's not a bad war, but it's the only war we have to protest."

Jason Doctor
Seattle, WA

• • •

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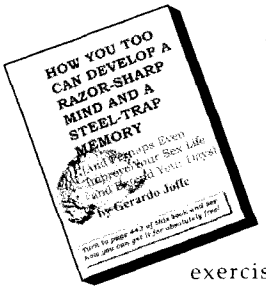

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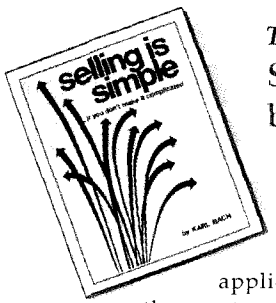

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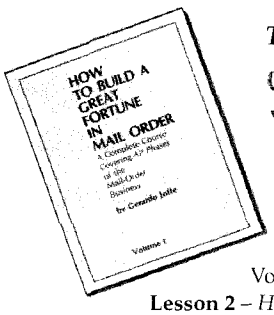

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The Two-State Solution

Will the "Road Map" lead to peace in the Middle East?

Two peoples, the Palestinians and the Israeli Jews living side by side in peace. The "two-state solution" has been proposed for decades to terminate the increasingly violent Arab-Israeli conflict. It is now being resurrected as the "Road Map," sponsored by the "quartet," consisting of the United States, Russia, the European Union, and the United Nations.

What are the facts?

A false premise: The basic premise, that the "Palestinians" need and deserve a state, is false. Because there are no such people as the "Palestinians," and before the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, nobody had ever heard of them. Until Jewish immigration to Palestine began, the country was sparsely settled, inhabited mostly by roving Bedouins. The industry and prosperity, the agricultural development, and modern infrastructure brought by the Jews proved an irresistible magnet for the Arabs from the surrounding regions.

The "two-state solution" has been tried before. Its most recent incarnation was the Oslo Accord, a detailed and elaborate plan, at the end of which a "Palestinian" state was envisioned. Israel, foolishly having acquiesced to the return of Yasser Arafat and his fellow thugs into the country, meticulously adhered to every point of that agreement, and in good faith turned big chunks of its country over to the control of the so-called "Palestinian Authority."

All the "Palestinians" had to do in return for this generosity, unprecedented in world history, was to renounce violence. But the "Palestinians," with the enthusiastic support of virtually all of the Arab states and of the Iranians, methodically violated even that modest requirement. They are armed to the teeth and continue to engage in bloody and violent struggle. They have caused untold havoc – close to 1,000 Israeli Jews killed and many more seriously wounded, just in the last two years.

The members of the "quartet" have taken it upon themselves to decide the destiny of Israel, without any consultation with Israel itself. Of its four members, only the United States can be considered friendly toward Israel. But even our country, sad to say, seems to consider sacrificing Israel in the vain hope of currying favor with the Arabs and the Moslems of the world to assuage their rage and anger in the wake of our war with Iraq.

Implacable hostility: The United Nations are inexorably hostile to Israel, beginning with the infamous resolution that Zionism equals racism. The European Union – unable to shed its centuries-old poison of anti-Semitism and in order to appease an ever-increasing Moslem minority, has cloaked its antagonism toward the Jews into the more acceptable anti-Israelism. Russia, despite its bloody problems with its own Moslems, having killed thousands in Chechnya, but with an eye on the billions of dollars of potential profit from the Arab nations, continues to be steadfast in its opposition to Israel.

> "No nation can be expected to enter into a suicide pact. Therefore... there will be no "two-state solution!"

At first blush, the "two-state solution" would seem to be a reasonable one: Two states for two peoples. But there are no two peoples; there is only tiny Israel – smaller than Lake Michigan – opposed by the vast array of implacably hostile Arabs – twenty-two states with over 250 million people – who want to carve a "Palestinian" state out of Israel's heartland. And the Arabs make no secret that that has only one single-minded purpose: to serve as a springboard for the final assault against Israel and its destruction – once and for all.

The world is fixated on creating a state for the "Palestinians," a non-existing people. Oddly, the world and the U.N. do not show any interest for real peoples, such as the Kurds, who have been languishing for centuries under the yoke of four different nations; for the Basques, whose struggle for freedom from France and Spain finds little sympathy; or for the Tibetans, who have suffered for decades under the brutality of the Chinese. And the United Nations has never acted on behalf of the suppressed Berbers in North Africa or concerned itself with the terrible fate of the Sudanese Christians. No, it is only the "Palestinians" who engage the attention of the world body.

The failure of the Oslo Accord and the bloody and seemingly never-ending intifada have proved that the entire Arab world and the Iranians have only one foreign policy goal, and that is the destruction of Israel. U.S. generals know and Israeli generals know that Israel, without Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"), is indefensible. The Arabs don't care about a twenty-third Arab state. They want the destruction of Israel. With the Arabs dominating the Judean heights and with that the ability to cut Israel in two at its narrow 9-mile-wide waist in one armored thrust, the two state so-called "solution" would be the death knell for Israel. It is deplorable that the United States – Israel's best friend by far – would attempt to impose such a "solution" on its staunchest ally and friend and on the only country in that entire area of the world that shares America's democratic and humane ideals and on which our country can count in any contingency. No nation can be expected to enter into a suicide pact. Therefore, regardless of what the "quartet" or anybody else might wish to impose on Israel, there will be no "Palestinian" state, no "two-state solution."

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the weekly Standard

The End of the Beginning

"Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."
Winston Churchill, November 10, 1942,
after the British defeat of the
German Afrika Korps in Egypt

The war on terror is not World War II, and George W. Bush is not Winston Churchill. Still, the war in which we are presently engaged is a fundamental challenge for the United States and the civilized world. It is a defining moment for America and American foreign policy. The victory in what the president called Thursday night "the battle of Iraq" is, perhaps, the end of the beginning of this larger war.

President Bush understands that we are engaged in a larger war. His opponents, on the whole, do not, and this accounts in large measure for the yawning gulf between the supporters and critics of the Bush Doctrine.

It is unclear, to say the least, what actual policies most of Bush's critics would follow. Different opponents would presumably embrace differing combinations of the sporadic use of American force, wishful exercises in appeasement, and endless negotiations at the United Nations and elsewhere. But what Bush's opponents have in common is a refusal to come to grips with the fundamental character of the war on terror: the fact that it is a *war*, of which Afghanistan and Iraq, as the president said, are merely battles. Thus they refuse to embrace the president's ambitious agenda, eloquently reiterated aboard the USS *Abraham Lincoln*, of targeting all terrorist groups and the states that support them, of confronting outlaw regimes that seek weapons of mass destruction, and of standing with the friends of freedom around the world.

When the president laid out his principles on Thursday, one formulation was particularly interesting: "Anyone in the world, including the Arab world, who works and sacrifices for freedom has a loyal friend in the United States." Why "including the Arab world"? Because that world—or better, perhaps, the Middle East or the Islamic world—is the heart of the problem. North Korea is a danger, to be sure. But it probably can be contained—and the global threat it poses is primarily in proliferating its deadly weapons to terrorists and terrorist states. Almost all of these are in the Middle East.

The liberation of Iraq was the first great battle for the future of the Middle East. The creation of a free Iraq is now of fundamental importance, and we must do what it takes to make a decent, democratic Iraq a reality. But the next great battle—not, we hope, a military battle—will be for Iran. We are already in a death struggle with Iran over the future of Iraq. The theocrats ruling Iran understand that the stakes are now double or nothing. They can stay in power by disrupting efforts to create a pluralist, non-theocratic, Shia-majority state next door—or they can fall, as success in Iraq sounds the death knell for the Iranian revolution.

So we must help our friends and allies in Iraq block Iranian-backed subversion. And we must also take the fight to Iran, with measures ranging from public diplomacy to covert operations. Iran is the tipping point in the war on proliferation, the war on terror, and the effort to reshape the Middle East. If Iran goes pro-Western and anti-terror, positive changes in Syria and Saudi Arabia will follow much more easily. And the chances for an Israeli-Palestinian settlement will greatly improve.

The president said on Thursday night, "Any outlaw regime that has ties to terrorist groups, and seeks or possesses weapons of mass destruction, is a grave danger to the civilized world, and will be confronted." That is Iran, above all. On the outcome of the confrontation with Tehran, more than any other, rests the future of the Bush Doctrine—and, quite possibly, the Bush presidency—and prospects for a safer world.

As Churchill also said in his speech of November 10, 1942, "We have not entered this war for profit or expansion, but only for honor and to do our duty in defending the right." All honor to Bush for confronting the challenge of our day in the same spirit, and with the same confidence. There will be setbacks and difficulties ahead. But surely we can, as we must, prevail.

—*William Kristol*

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The Al Qaeda Connection

Saddam's links to Osama were no secret.

BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

OOPS. In what could go down as the Mother of All Copy-editing Errors, *Babil*, the official newspaper of Saddam Hussein's government, run by his oldest son Uday, last fall published information that appears to confirm U.S. allegations of links between the Iraqi regime and al Qaeda. It adds one more piece to the small pile of evidence emerging from Iraq that, when added to the jigsaw puzzle we already had, makes obsolete the question of whether Saddam and Osama bin Laden were in league and leaves in doubt only the extent of the connection.

In its November 16, 2002, edition, *Babil* identified one Abd-al-Karim Muhammad Aswad as an "intelligence officer," describing him as the "official in charge of regime's contacts with Osama bin Laden's group and currently the regime's representative in Pakistan." A man of this name was indeed the Iraqi ambassador to Pakistan from the fall of 1999 until the fall of the regime.

Aswad's name was included in something *Babil* called an "honor list." Below that heading, in boldface type, came a straightforward introductory comment: "We publish this list of great men for the sons of our great people to see." Directly beneath that declaration came a cryptic addendum—included by accident?—in regular type: "This is a list of the henchmen of the regime. Our hands will reach them sooner or later. Woe unto them. A list of the leaders of Saddam's regime, as well as their present and previous posts."

Then comes the list of regime officials. It is in alphabetical order until, halfway down the page, it starts over with officials whose names begin with the letter "A." It includes Baath party leaders, military heroes, ambassadors, intelligence chiefs, the commander of the "Saddam Cubs Training Center," governors of Iraqi provinces, chemical and biological weapons experts, and so on.

In its November 16, 2002, edition, Babil, *the newspaper run by Uday Hussein, identified Abd-al-Karim Muhammad Aswad as the "official in charge of regime's contacts with Osama bin Laden's group."*

U.S. intelligence experts have not conclusively determined what the list means. One possible explanation they have entertained is that part of the list came from an opposition source, and that *Babil* republished it as a gesture of defiance. This would account for the reference to "henchmen of the regime" whom "our hands will reach"—to say nothing of the candid description of Aswad's duties.

Sounds plausible. But that explanation leaves unanswered one important question: Why would the regime, at a time when it was publicly denying any link to al Qaeda, publish *anything* admitting such a link?

Even if the identification of Aswad in the *Babil* list was nothing more than an embarrassing editorial oversight, several recent developments have bolstered the Bush administration's case that Saddam Hussein had connections to the al Qaeda leader.

On April 28, senior administration officials announced that the United States had captured an al Qaeda terrorist operating in Baghdad. The operative is believed to have been an associate of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a top al Qaeda figure who plotted the assassination of Laurence Foley, an American diplomat gunned down in Jordan last fall. Zarqawi is also believed to have received medical treatment in Baghdad after he was wounded fighting U.S. troops in Afghanistan.

That arrest came shortly after U.S. troops patrolling the Syrian border captured Farouk Hijazi, long believed to have been an outreach coordinator of sorts between the Iraqi government and al Qaeda. Hijazi, formerly a high-ranking Iraqi intelligence official, has confirmed to U.S. officials that he met Osama bin Laden in Sudan in 1994. He denies meeting with al Qaeda officials in 1998, but U.S. officials don't believe him. At that time, a leading newspaper in Rome reported that Hijazi traveled to Afghanistan on December 21, 1998, to offer asylum to bin Laden. The *Corriere della Sera* described Hijazi as "the person who has been responsible for nurturing Iraq's ties with the fundamentalist warriors since 1994."

Back then, reports about a budding Hussein-bin Laden partnership were not limited to the foreign press. *Newsweek* magazine, in its January 11, 1999, issue, ran the headline "Saddam + Bin Laden." The subhead declared, "America's two enemies are courting." The article was

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written by Christopher Dickey, Gregory Vistica, Russell Watson, and Joseph Contreras. The authors cited reports from an "Arab intelligence source" about the alliance.

> According to this source, Saddam expected last month's American and British bombing campaign to go on much longer than it did. The dictator believed that as the attacks continued, indignation would grow in the Muslim world, making his terrorism offensive both harder to trace and more effective. With acts of terror contributing to chaos in the region, Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait might feel less inclined to support Washington. Saddam's long-term strategy, according to several sources, is to bully or cajole Muslim countries into breaking the embargo against Iraq, without waiting for the United Nations to lift it formally.

(Interestingly, after Colin Powell's presentation last month to the U.N. Security Council linking Hussein and al Qaeda, Dickey reversed course and referred to the evidence of these links as "egregious smokescreens.")

The timing here is critical. Operation "Desert Fox" began on December 16, 1998, and ended after just 70 hours, on December 19, 1998. Two days later, Hijazi was dispatched to meet with al Qaeda leaders. And the *Newsweek* report detailing the increased collaboration appeared shortly thereafter. And it wasn't just *Newsweek*.

In fact, *Time* magazine, in an issue also out January 11, 1999, one-upped its competitor by quoting bin Laden himself on the Iraq issue. "There is no doubt that the treacherous attack has confirmed that Britain and America are acting on behalf of Israel and the Jews, paving the way for the Jews to divide the Muslim world once again, enslave it and loot the rest of its wealth. A great part of the force that carried out the attack came from certain Gulf countries that have lost their sovereignty."

U.S. intelligence officials who have expressed skepticism about a Hussein-bin Laden relationship often point to religious differences as the reason for their doubts. Hussein was secular, they say, bin Laden a fundamentalist. True enough. But, as bin Laden's comments suggest, there were bigger concerns—that America and "the Jews" might "divide the Muslim world once again"—that would trump these differences and unite the two men against a common enemy.

The Hijazi meeting wasn't the only Iraq-al Qaeda around that time. Eleven months before bin Laden spoke to *Time*, then-President Bill Clinton traveled to the Pentagon, where he gave a speech preparing the nation for war with Iraq. Clinton told the world that Saddam Hussein would work with an "unholy axis of terrorists, drug traffickers, and organized international criminals." His warning was stern.

> We have to defend our future from these predators of the 21st century. . . . They will be all the more lethal if we allow them to build arsenals of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and the missiles to deliver them. We simply cannot allow that to happen. There is no more clear example of this threat than Saddam Hussein.

The timing, once again, is critical. Clinton's speech came on February 18, 1998. The next day, according to documents uncovered earlier this week in Baghdad, Saddam Hussein reached out to bin Laden. A document dated February 19, 1998, and labeled "Top Secret and Urgent" tells of a plan for an al Qaeda operative to travel from Sudan to Iraq for talks with Iraqi intelligence. The memo focused on Saudi Arabia, another common bin Laden and Hussein foe, and declared that the Mukhabarat would pick up "all the travel and hotel costs inside Iraq to gain the knowledge of the message from bin Laden and to convey to his envoy an oral message from us to bin Laden." The document further explained that the message "would relate to the future of our relationship with him, bin Laden, and to achieve a direct meeting with him." The document

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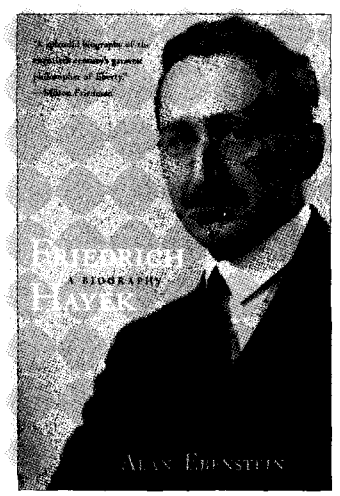

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also held open the possibility that the al Qaeda representative could be "a way to maintain contacts with bin Laden."

There is certainly much more to learn about the "contacts with bin Laden" after this meeting. What is clear, though, is that it is no longer defensible to claim there were no contacts. The skeptics, including many at the CIA, who argued that previous evidence of such links was not compelling, ought to be convinced now. They may well argue that, given the timing of the contacts, Saddam reached out to al Qaeda only when he felt threatened. The facts as we know them today are consistent with such a conclusion. But as journalists continue to pore over documents, and military analysts begin to do the same, it would be hasty to imagine that we've already uncovered everything there is to find on the bin Laden-Saddam tie.

Whatever the differences between al Qaeda and the Iraqi regime, the two shared a hatred of America. One Iraqi official, some weeks after the September 11 attacks, publicly criticized the United States for rooting out al Qaeda in Afghanistan. The official was quoted in a report in broken English carried on *The Pakistan Newswire* of October 29, 2001, which said: "He stressed the US to stop bombardment on Afghanistan resulting in death of innocent children, women and elderly people." The official, who had been in his job since 1999, also expressed doubt that bin Laden was even a terrorist and responsible for 9/11. He "said the US President Bush should knock the door of international court of justice to address the situation because only court had authority to declare Prime suspect of September 11 tragedy 'Osama Bin Laden' terrorist or not.'"

You might recognize the official's name. It was published in *Babil* last fall: Abd-al-Karim Muhammad Aswad, "intelligence officer, official in charge of regime's contacts with Osama bin Laden's group and currently the regime's representative in Pakistan." ♦

Bad Reporting in Baghdad

You have no idea how well things are going.

BY JONATHAN FOREMAN

AFP / Ramzi Haidar

Baghdad

IT'S ENDLESSLY FASCINATING to watch the interactions between U.S. patrols and the residents of Baghdad. It's not just the love bombing the troops continue to receive from all classes of Baghdadi—though the intensity of the population's pro-American enthusiasm is astonishing, even to an early believer in the liberation of Iraq, and continues unabated despite delays in restoring power and water to the city. It's things like the reaction of the locals to black troops. They seem to be amazed by their presence in the American army. One group of kids in a poor neighborhood shouted "Mike Tyson, Mike Tyson" at Staff Sergeant Darren Swain; the daughter of a diplomat on the other hand informed him, "One of my maids has the same skin as you."

It's things like the way the women old and young flirt outrageously with GIs, lifting their veils to smile, waving from high windows, and shyly calling hello from half-opened doors. Or the way the little girls seem to speak much better English than the little boys who are always elbowing them out of the way. Or the way the troops get a sense of the gender violence endemic in the culture: Yesterday in the poor al Sahliya neighborhood two sweet 12 to 14-year-old sisters on a rooftop who introduced themselves to me and Staff Sergeant Gannon Edgy as Souha and Samaha were chased away by a rock-wielding male relative. His violent anger hinted at problems to come here.

But you won't see much of this on TV or read about it in the papers. To an amazing degree, the Baghdad-based press corps avoids writing about or filming the friendly dealings between U.S. forces here and the local

Jonathan Foreman is a correspondent for the New York Post, *embedded with the Scout Platoon of the 4th Battalion, 64th Armored Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division in Baghdad.*

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population—most likely because to do so would require them to report the extravagant expressions of gratitude that accompany every such encounter. Instead you read story after story about the supposed fury of Baghdadis at the Americans for allowing the breakdown of law and order in their city.

Well, I've met hundreds of Iraqis as I accompanied army patrols all over the city during the past two weeks and I've never encountered any such fury (even in areas that were formerly controlled by the Marines, who as the premier warrior force were never expected to carry out peacekeeping or policing functions). There is understandable frustration about the continuing failure of the Americans to get the water supply and the electricity turned back on, though the ubiquity of generators indicates that the latter was always a problem. And there are appeals for more protection (difficult to provide with only 12,000 troops in a city of 6 million that has not been placed under strick martial law). But there is no fury.

Given that a large proportion of the city's poorest residents have taken part in looting the Baathist elite's ministries, homes, and institutions, that should tell you something about the sources preferred by the denizens of the Palestine Hotel (the preferred home of the press corps). Indeed it's striking that while many of the troops I've accompanied find themselves feeling some sympathy for the inhabitants of "Typhoid Alley" and other destitute neighborhoods and their attempts to obtain fans, furniture, TVs, etc., the press corps often seems solidly on the side of those who grew fat under the Saddam regime. (That said, imagine the press hysteria that would have greeted a decision by U.S. troops to use deadly force against the looters and defend the property of the city's elite.) Even in the wealthiest neighborhoods—places like the Mansoor district, where you still see intact pictures of Saddam Hussein—people seem to be a lot more pro-American than you could ever imagine from reading the wires.

Perhaps this is just another case of reporters with an anti-American or antiwar agenda. Perhaps living in Saddam's totalitarian Baghdad has left some of the press here with a case of Stockholm syndrome. It may also be a byproduct of depending on interpreters and fixers who were connected to or worked with the approval of the Saddam regime. And you cannot underestimate the herd instinct that can take over when you have a lot of media folk in a confined area for any length of time. But whatever the cause, the result has been very selective reporting.

The Associated Press's Hamza Hendawi, for instance, massively exaggerated and misrepresented the nature of the looting in Baghdad in the first days after the U.S. armored forces took key points in the city. Like so many Baghdad-based reporters, she described an "unchecked frenzy" that did not exist at that time (the looting was targeted and nonviolent, in the sense that the looters attacked neither persons nor inhabited dwellings). Read her pieces and you'll meet a veritable parade of Iraqis who are angry with the United States.

Then there were those exaggerated reports of April 18 claiming (as Reuters' Hassan Hafidh put it) that "Tens of thousands of protesters demanded on Friday that the United States get out of Iraq. . . . In the biggest protest since U.S. forces toppled Saddam Hussein's iron-fisted, 24-year-long rule nine days ago, Muslims poured out of mosques and into the streets of Baghdad, calling for an Islamic state to be established." Demonstrators did come out of one mosque, but reporters seem to have confused them with the large numbers of Shia Muslims gathering for the pilgrimage to Karbala—a pilgrimage long forbidden by the Saddam regime.

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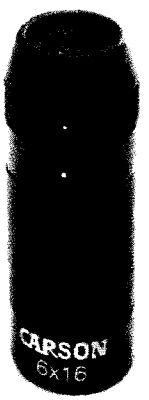

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strations in the blocks outside the Palestine and Sheraton hotels—partly because that is where the press corps is congregated, but also because it's an area that many Baath party officials fled to after the war began. Anyone who assumes that the atmosphere of that downtown area is in any way representative of the city would be gravely mistaken. However, many reporters have chosen to do just that rather than venture further out to places where they would have seen that far more typical and frequent "demonstrations" involve hundreds or even thousands of Iraqis gathering to cheer U.S. troops. Admittedly, some of those crowds include people begging for money, desperate for aid, or just curious about these strange-looking foreigners. "Most children here have never seen a foreigner" one Iraqi civilian explained to me, "that is why they are so excited." Another told me with a smile, "Everyone here wanted to go to America; now America has come here!"

More irritating is the myth constantly repeated by antiwar columnists that the military let the city be destroyed—in particular the hospitals and the national museum—while guarding the Ministry of Oil. The museum looting is turning out to have been grotesquely exaggerated. And there is no evidence for the ministry of oil story. Depending on the article, the Marines had either a tank or a machine gun nest outside the ministry. Look for a photo of that tank or that machine gun nest and you'll look in vain. And even if the Marines had briefly guarded the oil ministry it would have been by accident: The Marines defended only the streets around their own headquarters and so-called Areas of Operation. Again, though, given the pro-regime sources favored by so many of the press corps huddled in the Palestine Hotel, it's not surprising that this rumor became gospel.

A typical piece of reporting on the "destruction" in Baghdad came from the *Washington Post*'s Rajiv Chandrasekaran on April 22, which repeated all the usual gossip about the ministry of oil and then quoted Saad Jawad, a professor of political science at Baghdad University: "The Iraqis had very high hopes for the Americans," Jawad told him. "But all this euphoria about change, all this relief, went away when they saw the amount of destruction to the infrastructure of the country and the carelessness of the Americans to the Iraqis' day-to-day lives." Yes, euphoria is bound dissipate, but there's no sign it has yet. More important, *what infrastructure destruction?* The reporter lets the charge stand undisputed but must be aware that roads, bridges, power stations, and rails lines were all left unbombed and intact by U.S. forces.

There are frequent small demonstrations in the blocks outside the Palestine and Sheraton hotels, partly because that is where the press corps is congregated, but also because it's an area that many Baath party officials fled to.

The exception was power substations that fed key government buildings and broadcasting facilities (unless you count army bases and secret police headquarters as "infrastructure").

But my favorite mad media moment was when an AP journalist turned up in a car heading to the Ministry of Information, the top floor of which was on fire. "Why aren't you putting out the fire?" she angrily demanded of Sgt. William Moore. He looked at her with astonishment and asked, "How the hell am I supposed to do that?" Turning away, he muttered, "Piss on it?"

It is true that the military has been slow in some respects to make the transition to an occupation role. And the senior brass here and at CENTCOM have a lot of explaining to do about their planning for postwar operations—the Army arrived here with virtually no Arabic speakers and even after two weeks there were only a handful. But as Gen. Buford Blount of the 3rd Infantry Division pointed out the same day as the Ministry of Information fire, "It's only a week since we were in combat here," and the media have bizarrely high expectations about how quickly a conquered city should return to normal.

Even embedded journalists (or perhaps their editors) can unconsciously misconstrue the facts on the ground. For instance, David Zucchino of the *Los Angeles Times*, who like me is embedded with the 4th Battalion of the 64th Armored Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, recently accompanied my Scout platoon on a patrol. We went to an upmarket residential area, in which houses that formerly belonged to top Baath officials had been taken over by looters—and in which a house owned by Qusay Hussein had been destroyed by a JDAM bomb. I was talking to Dr. Ali Faraj al Salih, a cardiologist trained at Edinburgh, when Zucchino, a fine, experienced foreign correspondent, walked over and began listening in. I asked Dr. Ali if he'd had any trouble with looters. "No" he replied, "I have guns, with license from the government. And I have two bodyguards." "Have you always had the bodyguards?" I asked him. "Oh yes," he said.

But Zucchino's April 22 article in the *L.A. Times*—headlined "In Postwar 'Dodge City,' Soldiers Now Deputies"—reports "Dr. Ali Faraj, a cardiologist, stood before his well-appointed home and mentioned that he has hired two armed guards," as if the doctor had been driven to this expense by unrest following the arrival of the Americans.

Things may yet go horribly wrong here in American-occupied Baghdad. But it is bizarre and sad that so few journalists are able or willing to recognize this honeymoon period for what it is. ♦

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Reading, Writing, De-Baathification

Reeducating Iraq.

BY MEYRAV WURMSER

IRAQ'S RECONSTRUCTION poses challenges to American policymakers not seen since World War II. Hardest of all is the reshaping of Iraq's political culture—that is, replacing the Baath party cult of enslavement and hate with liberal-democratic ideas. Iraqis have been fed Baathist ideology for 34 years. In school, they have been taught that the highest values are self-sacrifice for pan-Arab unity, loyalty to the dictator, and hatred of the United States and Israel. Saddam's education system must now be razed and a new system built in its place. The first step is to understand the twisted thinking to which Iraqi children have been exposed.

Baathism, the official ideology of Iraq since 1979 and of Syria since the 1960s, is not just a theory of interest to party intellectuals. Rather, it is a set of ideas meant to pervade the lives of the people, starting with the children. Schoolbooks in Iraq and Syria were intended not to educate but to destroy the individual, by capturing his mind, killing his soul, and turning his body into a tool of the state. The product of this education was conformist, without personal ambition, and reconciled to the dictator and his totalitarian state.

In Baathist textbooks, the state and the party are presented as one, and the leader is its embodiment. Loyalty to this father figure must override every other bond. In Syria, textbooks devoted to party indoctrination figure in the secondary-level curriculum. In Iraq, textbooks recruited students into a Baathist organization for children called the Vanguard as early as the third grade.

Baathist textbooks teach that a narrow understanding of nationality must be transcended. In its place they enshrine the romantic quest for a revolutionary, socialist, pan-Arab state stretching from the Arabian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean. They teach that Arabs will recapture their place as the world's leading civilization only if they are united. So much is unity the cornerstone of Baathist ideology that the party defines socialism as a struggle between the Arab masses and the opponents of Arab unity, rather than as a class struggle dividing the Arab nation. Although secular, the ideology propounded in Iraqi and Syrian schools is no less extreme or more hospitable to the West than Islamist fanaticism.

Given the centrality of the quest for Arab unity, the adversaries of the Arab world are a natural focus of the curriculum. These adversaries must be fought. Baathism is presented as antithetical to the West. In fact, Baathism defines Arab identity as a struggle against Western imperialism and colonialism. The Syrian education system teaches that the Zionist movement—second biggest enemy after the United States—was created by Western colonialists for the purpose of defeating and exploiting the Arab world. A Syrian eighth-grade social studies textbook explains that Zionism followed the rise of colonialism and the European states' takeover of many of the lands of underdeveloped countries. It asserts that some rich Jews, together with the Western colonial powers, wanted to gather all Jews in Palestine, which, once it was settled and filled, would become the springboard for seizing and plundering the entire Arab nation.

Iraqi textbooks, according to an April 20 report in the *New York Times*, give an even longer list of the state's adversaries. In addition to the "imperialist" United States and Zionism, they include Iran and NATO. As in Syria, tyranny is justified as the only means of protecting the people from colonialism. Dissent is rejected as treason, and revolt against the tyrant would leave the nation helpless before the designs of the colonialists. In other words, survival requires submission to the dictatorship. An Iraqi sixth-grade textbook quotes Saddam praising his Republican Guard as "the men for difficult missions," such as "protecting the nation and defending it from Persian, American, NATO, and Zionist aggression."

Both Iraqi and Syrian textbooks thus turn the language of freedom on its head. They brand as treasonous both individualism and limited government. Because Baathism regards colonialism as an imminent and pervasive threat, the schools must teach children that their main purpose in life is to defend their tyrannical regime, if necessary to the death. In Iraq, textbooks for sixth graders taught that all citizens were duty-bound to volunteer for the armed forces in order to "defend the nation and sacrifice for it." This duty so dominated the lives of Iraqi citizens that children were taught not to value education highly and were discouraged from pursuing secondary or higher education. Iraqi textbooks emphasized that one could fulfill one's duty to the state by volunteering for the armed forces with as little as an elementary education. Thus, the citizen's ability to contribute to Iraqi society did not depend on his qualifications. It depended only on his willingness to die defending the regime.

Similarly, in Syria, although the state is secular, children are taught that it is their duty and highest pur-

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pose in life to wage *jihad* (holy war) and become martyrs in the service of the Baathist ideology. The Syrian state manipulates religion to ensure that the citizens are willing to die for its survival.

Syrian textbooks spell out the spiritual rewards awaiting martyrs in the hereafter, but they also note the material benefits to be delivered in this life. The textbooks teach that the late president Hafez Assad "believed in the [elevated] status of martyrs and provides their families with much attention." A ninth-grade textbook explains that this presidential care led to the establishment of a special Syrian city called The City of the Martyrs' Children, where children of martyrs "receive compensation for the motherly and fatherly love they have lost."

In light of this indoctrination, it is not surprising that Arab volunteers from outside Iraq fought American forces alongside Saddam's loyalists. Instead of rejoicing at the collapse of one of the world's darkest dictatorships, these young volunteers, many of them from Syria, chose to defend Iraq in the name of pan-Arab nationalism. They chose glorified slavery over liberation. They could not countenance the defeat of a fellow Arab regime, no matter how brutal and despotic, by America. Like many in the Arab world, they couldn't digest the shock of seeing liberated Iraqis welcoming Americans.

The biggest task Americans face in reforming the Iraqi education system is not to refurbish schoolrooms or round up capable teachers (Iraq has plenty), but to attend to the content of what is taught: especially to replace the instruction in hate and loyalty to the tyrant with lessons in the meaning of citizenship, the intrinsic value of the individual, and a new Iraqi nationalism hospitable to democratic ideas. This is as big a job as the one we faced after the defeat of Nazism in Europe. Education is the only means of causing the next generation of Iraqis to grow into free men and women. And that alone will bring lasting liberation to Iraq. ♦

Stalin Lives!

At least in his birthplace.

BY MIKE MURPHY

Bettmann/Corbis

Gori, Georgia

I WAS in the Republic of Georgia, mucking about in its upcoming elections and fighting for democratization and the pro-Western New Rights party. While there, I couldn't resist a quick visit to Gori, the hometown of one Iosif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili, aka Josef Stalin.

Stalin grew up poor, living with his parents in a rented 10-by-12-foot room in a small cabin made from rough wood. The cabin still exists, in the same place, except now it sits in front of a huge museum which has grown like a giant granite and marble fungus. The Stalin museum is several stories tall and as wide as a city block. Just looking at it gives you a powerful urge to crush some Kulaks and conquer Finland. At four o'clock on a weekday it was also closed. Ironically, the new mayor of Gori is a proud member of the center-right party I work for, and he was happy to crack open the old socialist funhouse for me.

Electricity shortages are a big problem in Georgia, and keeping the Stalin museum heated and lit is not a priority. It was dark inside. Late afternoon light poured in from tall vertical windows, casting a long row of fingerlike shafts down cold and vacant hallways. Along the walls, huge pictures of Stalin hung silently in the shadows.

Several of the dozen or so rather severe women who supervise the place appeared out of a dark corridor. I was content to wander around for a quick look, but rules are rules, particularly in the Stalin museum. The guide snapped her pointer to full length and motioned me to my assigned place at the beginning of the tour route. The guides work from a memorized script and that oration, like the museum, is frozen in time, circa 1973. Nobody here ever got the memo from Moscow about the fall of the Soviet Union. We start at one end of a large hall, looking at photos of the young Stalin, his wolfish eyes apparent even in kindergarten, and watch him age photo by photo. The guide's metallic narration was the kind of no-nonsense stuff that sounds best coming over the bullhorn in a labor camp. "Comrade Stalin studied hard at school. Here are two poems he wrote in his own hand. He sang in the choir. He had a good voice. He studied theology at the university. He was expelled for revolutionary activ-

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ities. He was sent to prison. He escaped. He was exiled to another prison. He escaped. He was sent to another prison north of the Arctic Circle where the guards crippled his left arm." (A little revolutionary license here: Most historians say Stalin's bad arm was actually from a childhood case of smallpox.)

Reuters

Stalin's funeral (opposite page); a World War II veteran, outside the Stalin museum (above)

The tour proceeds into a long hall filled with comradely photos of Stalin happily smiling with different revolutionary pals from the '20s and early '30s. As these pictures pass one after another and his many prematurely expired cohorts are named, a chilling thought comes to mind: The most dangerous place to stand in the Soviet Union was next to Stalin and in front of a photographer. Every flashbulb begat a death sentence.

The museum is very big on Stalin's many hard-earned credentials. A large proclamation announces Comrade Stalin's membership in the Soviet Academy of Sciences. The members of the academy signed it *unanimously*, we are informed. Stalin was promoted *twice*, to grand marshall of the Red Army, for his brilliant military leadership in the Great Patriotic War Against Fascism. There is an entertaining bric-a-brac collection, featuring his famous pipe, a shaving kit, a few uniforms, and a gaudy accordion. Standing in the center of one room is what has to be the most menacing and ferocious table lamp ever created: a 150-pound behemoth of jagged steel crudely hammered into the shape of a Soviet tank crashing into battle.

One very creepy room features a death mask of Stalin made shortly after he died. Looking at it, or rather feeling the Stalin mask icily staring at me, I wanted to tear it into several different pieces and bury each one in a different continent, just to be sure. The family photo wall, featuring Stalin the Romantic, is small. The narration clanks along briskly: "This is Premier Stalin's first wife. They were divorced. This is his second wife. She committed suicide. His son Yakov was captured by the Germans. Hitler offered to trade Yakov for a German general, but Stalin refused. 'All Russian soldiers are my sons,' Stalin said. Yakov was shot escaping a German prison." (Another rewrite: Stalin actually despised Yakov, and threw Yakov's wife into Lubyanka prison after the man was captured.)

The best trinket is outside. Parked next to the museum is Stalin's old private train car. Steel-plated, it weighs 80 tons. The interior features a kitchen and a few small rooms for his nervous servants and military aide, a private cabin—you can take a picture of his toilet—and a central meeting room finished in dark polished wood and hunter green paint. This command room contains a conference table and about five chairs for staff with the predictable Maximum Leader Chair at the head. Stalin hated to fly and vastly preferred rumbling along in his armored train. (Knowing that any merciless Iron Ruler is a pitiful second-rater without a private steel-plated train car to tour his impoverished slave state in, Stalin gave one, after the war, to North Korean tyrant Kim Il Sung. His loony son Kim Jong Il still rides around in that train car, terrorizing the Korean people to this day.)

We locked up the museum and got back on the road to Tbilisi. The rough politics of the new Georgia awaited us as this fragile country moves along its bumpy road to democracy.

Once, loads of Soviet tourists filled the museum. Now it's a tomb, but you still get an uneasy feeling the ghost of Stalin remains. The electricity is gone, the crowds are gone, and soon enough the museum may be gone as well. In a few years, I'll look for that growling tank lamp on eBay. But when they tear the place down, I hope somebody buries that death mask. Quite deeply, in pieces scattered across different continents, just to be sure. ♦

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New Name, Same Old Story

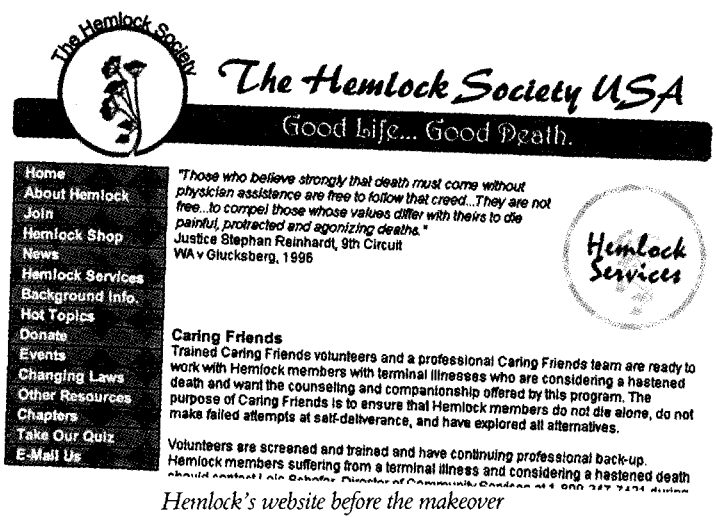
The Hemlock Society goes for an image change.

BY WESLEY J. SMITH

WHAT'S *NOT* IN A NAME is the question du jour at single-issue advocacy groups. First the venerable National Abortion Rights Action League (or National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League in recent years) officially dropped *abortion* from its name and became "NARAL Pro-Choice America." Now, the Hemlock Society, the premier assisted-suicide group, has decided to recast its image with a new name (still not chosen) and a new P.R.-driven motto: The founding slogan, "Good life, good death," has been discarded for the new and improved "Promoting end-of-life choice."

Changing the group's name is designed to put a respectable veneer over the organization's *raison d'être*—legitimizing suicide. Yet, the word hemlock remains entirely apt. From its inception, the Hemlock Society has been obsessed with exercising control over death through suicide. Indeed, Hemlockers claim that assisted suicide, which they now euphemistically call "aid in dying," is the "ultimate civil right."

I became aware of the organization in 1992 when a friend killed herself under the influence of Hemlock Society literature. Frances's problem wasn't illness; it was depression over a life that had become a complete mess. When she was diagnosed with leukemia (which was not terminal), began to experience a painful neuropathy (while refusing to take her pain-controlling drugs), and learned she would soon require a hip replacement, Frances seems to have found the pretext she needed to justify finally doing what she had wanted to do for so long. Indeed, we found out after the fact that months before she died, Frances had entered an appointment in her calendar—the date of her 76th birthday—for her "final passage," an appointment she kept, accompanied by a distant cousin who was paid $5,000 to be with her, and perhaps, to assist her suicide.



Hemlock's website before the makeover

Ever organized, Frances kept a suicide file. It contained several editions of the Hemlock Society's newsletter, then called the *Hemlock Quarterly*. As I read these newsletters, I was shocked out of my shoes. Each *Quarterly* was filled with proselytizing stories about so-called "good deaths" that had been facilitated by Hemlock members. For example, in the January 1988 issue, Frances had underscored the following words describing the suicide of "Sam," a terminal cancer patient:

> Believe it or not, we laughed and giggled and [Sam] seemed to relish the experience. I think for Sam it was finally taking control again after ten years of being at the mercy of a disease and medical protocols demanded by that disease.

Suicide promoted as uplifting and enjoyable sickened me. But what really infuriated me was the "how to" sections of the newsletters. In one issue, a list of drugs was provided, with their relative toxicity. Frances had underscored the drugs that were the most poisonous.

I realized that this group, made up of people who didn't even know Frances, had been, figuratively speaking, whispering in her ear for years. First, they gave her moral permission to kill herself, fostering a romanticism about suicide that helped push her toward consummation. Then they convinced her she would be remembered with warmth for her act of taking "control." Finally, they taught her how to do it. I felt then, and do today, that while Frances was responsible for her own self-destruction, morally, if not legally, the Hemlock Society was an accessory before the fact.

In the years since Frances's suicide, Hemlock has gone through some outward changes while remaining steadfast to its dark ideology. It changed the name of the *Hemlock Quarterly* to *Timelines*, recently renamed again, this time to *End of Life Choices*. Its leadership changed, too, as the group struggled to appear less fringe, more mainstream and professional. But the more it tried to project a respectable image on the outside, the more obsessed with

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Parents ... Grandparents ... Families ... This is for YOU

A WARNING TO TELEVISION SPONSORS...

...from more than 750,000 parents, grandparents, teachers and other decent Americans who are outraged because

your TV commercials are paying to corrupt a generation.

These are just some of the morally tragic consequences of the TV filth, sex and violence that SPONSORS ARE PAYING to broadcast into our homes:

WILLIAM J. BENNETT
Member, Parents Television Council Advisory Board and Former Secretary of Education

- A study of prime-time TV shows done by the Parents Television Council showed sexual content increased in the past decade more than 300 percent.
- A child sees 14,000 adult-theme sexual references and innuendoes each year on television—almost 40 a day. And in a survey of 10- to 16-year-olds, 62 percent said sex on TV influences their peers to have sex.
- Sexually-transmitted diseases among teens are at all-time record levels.
- By age 18, the average child will have viewed about 200,000 violent acts on TV, including 40,000 murders.
- The connection between violent entertainment and violent behavior has been documented in more than 3,000 research studies.
- An ABC network study found 22–34 percent of young felons imprisoned for violent crimes said they had consciously imitated crime techniques seen on TV.

We want it stopped...now!

A Personal Message From: William J.Bennett
To: America's Parents, Grandparents and Families

How You Can Help Clean Up Television

The Parents Television Council has had many successes in forcing the cancellation and/or curtailment of offensive content on TV shows by focusing the moral outrage of our growing coalition of more than 750,000 decent and responsible Americans on TV SPONSORS.

Without sponsors, TV shows filled with sex and violence can't get on the air!

The 20 biggest sponsors alone spend a total of more than six billion dollars advertising on network television. If just these 20 companies withheld sponsorship from shows that damage children, the networks would have to clean up TV.

I am asking every person who agrees with this ad to join our coalition of concerned citizens by signing the WARNING TO TV SPONSORS on the reply coupon at right.

Every month, the Parents Television Council totals the number received and notifies the TV Sponsors -- demanding that they stop spending their commercial dollars on TV programming that is corrupting our children and grandchildren.

Please add your signature to the WARNING TO TV SPONSORS today.

Bill Bennett

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Please enclose check or money order payable to PTC.

Or, you may call 1-866-346-1888 to add your name to the Warning and make an optional tax-deductible contribution.

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www.parentstv.org/actionalert/tvsponsors.asp
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But whether you donate or not ... please add your name to the PTC's WARNING TO SPONSORS today. Clip & mail this coupon TODAY to:

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suicide the group seems to have become on the inside.

No longer satisfied to publish literature teaching people like Frances how to kill themselves or assist the suicides of others, several years ago Hemlock began to train volunteers to visit suicidal Hemlock members to counsel and, it would seem, hasten their deaths through its "Caring Friends" program. According to a tape transcript from the January 2003 Hemlock Society National Convention, the group's medical director, Dr. Richard McDonald, is present at many Caring Friends suicides and extols the use of helium and a plastic bag as a "very speedy process that has never failed in our program."

One need not be dying to qualify for Caring Friends' services. According to the November 1998 *Timelines*, access to Caring Friends is available for Hemlock members with "an irreversible physical condition that severely compromises quality of life," which could include a plethora of illnesses and disabilities that are not terminal.

The Winter 2003 *End of Life Choices* reports proudly that 32 Hemlock members "died with Caring Friends information, support, and presence" in 2002. Knowing that Hemlock members are fascinated by the methods used, the article catalogues them: "Thirty used the inhalation method and two used the ingestion method."

Choices also informs us that 15 of these suicides were in hospice at the time of their deaths. If so, then the Caring Friends interfered with proper medical treatment of these patients. When I was trained as a hospice volunteer, I was explicitly told that suicidal ideation was a *medical issue* that hospice could often address successfully in dying patients and instructed to inform the hospice team of any expressed desire to self-destruct. Of course, Caring Friends is not about assuring that dying patients receive proper medical treatment.

The radical scope of Hemlock's ideological agenda is demonstrated by its financial and moral support of Dr. Phillip Nitschke, the Australian Jack Kevorkian. Nitschke is an out-and-out advocate of death-on-demand, who is infamous Down Under for his plan to purchase a passenger ship, which he intends to steam into international waters on one-way euthanasia death cruises. Nitschke has been paid tens of thousands of dollars by the Hemlock Society USA to invent a suicide formula that uses common household ingredients: a potion Nitschke calls the "peaceful pill."

In a 2001 Q & A on *National Review Online*, Nitschke was asked who would be eligible to receive his suicide concoction. His answer is macabre, even by surrealistic Hemlock standards:

> All people qualify, not just those with the training, knowledge, or resources to find out how to "give away" their life. And someone needs to provide this knowledge, training, or resource necessary to anyone who wants it, including the depressed, the elderly bereaved [and] the troubled teen. . . . The so-called "peaceful pill" should be available in the supermarket so that those old enough to understand death could obtain death peacefully at the time of their choosing.

For anyone with any moral sense, Nitschke is clearly a crackpot. But he remains a hero to members of Hemlock. He was an honored guest at the organization's 2003 national convention in San Diego, where he was invited to unveil his most recently invented suicide machine. Despite being deprived of the chance to ooh and ah at Nitschke's handiwork when Australian customs authorities seized the contraption, attendees gave him a rousing standing ovation.

Which brings us back to the pending name change. According to an article in the latest issue of *Choices*, the name change is designed "to increase membership, to accelerate name recognition and approval, and to [facilitate] work with legislators sympathetic to our mission, who find the name Hemlock offensive and difficult to explain." In other words, the name Hemlock Society must change *because* it is descriptive and accurate.

Not surprisingly, the magic word "choice" is likely to be part of the new name. Among the current contenders are: End of Life Choices America (EOLCA), Voices of Choice at Life's End (VOCAL), the Final Exit Society, and the Promoting Options for a Peaceful End, which translates into the sarcastic acronym (POPE).

But a simple name change won't heal what really ails Hemlock. What these death-obsessed folk just don't get is that the word hemlock isn't what offends people; it is their nihilism. Hemlock can change its name to the Mormon Tabernacle Choir if it wants to. But that won't change the fact that a deadly poison perfectly conveys the heart, soul, and purpose of the organization. ♦

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The Restoration of American Awe

And the opening of the Arab mind

By Reuel Marc Gerecht

Throughout the Muslim Middle East, the Battle of Baghdad was an enormously depressing non-event. The Arab media had expected the end of Saddam Hussein's regime to be "Basra-plus"—a valiant resistance blending Mogadishu with a hint of Stalingrad. Whether in Egypt's official journal of record, *Al-Ahram*, on the Arabic satellite-television station Al Jazeera, or on BBC radio and television, anti-American tacticians sounded similar themes. If the regime's paramilitary *fedayeen* could so surprise and frustrate the Americans and the British in the anti-Saddam Shia south, imagine what they and the Republican Guards Corps were going to do in the capital and towns of Iraq's Sunni heartland.

Arab and Muslim honor were at stake. In the officially certified pantheon of the Middle East's sacred things, pride of blood and faith rests above individual liberty and democracy. The Arab world's Sunni population, which never, truth be told, wept over Saddam's merciless onslaught against the rebellious Shia in 1991, wanted to believe that they and the Shia were one against the United States. Saddam Hussein was not a beloved man in the Arab Middle East—the Saudi holy warrior Osama bin Laden has enjoyed vastly more affection—but he had for more than a decade kept the United States and the West off-balance and divided. Saddam's storm troopers' last stand was meant to salve wounded pride and be condign punishment for American hubris. (Odds are good that most Arab, European, Russian, and Chinese *penseurs*, not to mention senior French and German officials, were thinking here quite similarly.) The historically inclined among the anti-American Arab political elite also knew that a killing field in Baghdad just might forestall the gut-wrenching reflection that has followed every major Muslim military disaster since Napoleon made mincemeat of Turkish Mamluks in Egypt in 1798.

These hopes collapsed as soon as American soldiers easily captured Baghdad's international airport and began sending armored columns into the center of the capital. CNN's reporting on the "Arab street" relayed quite matter-of-factly the coffeehouse glumness throughout the region. Al Jazeera delivered the same depressing "say-it-ain't-so" message, giving hope to its viewers only through prognostications about the growing anti-Americanism of liberated Iraq. Everywhere anti-American demonstrations evaporated. (It should be said that Al Jazeera, CNN, and the BBC, which have all given prominence to Iraqi sentiments critical of the United States, may in the end be right about the developing power of anti-Americanism in Iraq, but the alacrity of this reporting in such a large country even before Saddam's fall was, to say the least, forward-leaning.)

The virtually nonexistent Battle of Baghdad decisively accomplished what the first several days of the war—the "shock-and-awe" portion—had not, or at least had not in the eyes of many beholders (postwar commentary from surviving Iraqi soldiers will provide the last word on whether the Pentagon misnamed its battle tactics). America's armed forces had taken from Saddam Hussein his *hayba*—the awe that belongs to indomitable authority. Saddam Hussein's Iraq was only a republic of fear, as Kanan Makiya, the Iraqi dissident writer, has been saying for years, and not a nationalist enterprise. Once the dread vanished, nationalism did not fill the void, as some academic experts on the country had predicted. Rank-and-file Iraqi soldiers, let alone civilians, did not interpret their love of land and faith against the United States. They did not in numbers join Saddam's irregulars.

Awe of American power is, of course, a perishable commodity, both inside Iraq and, perhaps more important, elsewhere in the Middle East. Washington can certainly diminish the respect and acquiescence its military victory has gained by using its power unwisely or, more likely, failing to use its power when it should. Middle

Reuel Marc Gerecht, a contributing editor, is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

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Eastern regimes, especially clerical Iran's, will no doubt challenge America's place in Iraq, especially if American efforts to establish liberal democracy are seen to be serious. Under the Bush administration, the restoration of American awe in the Middle East is now inextricably linked to the expansion of liberal values. This point may be lost on European intellectuals, who more often than not see the root causes for the war in some "imperialist" grab for oil or in an Israel-first, Jewish-American conspiracy. It may be lost in certain American quarters, who likewise are distinctly uncomfortable juxtaposing the words "liberal" and "Bush."

Odds are, however, that the rulers of the Middle East will be able to see through the maze of third-world conspiracies and prejudices that define so much of their thought to the motive forces behind President Bush's War on Terrorism and his Axis of Evil doctrine. For them, would that American preferences were so mundane as oil, Israel, or the sphere-of-influence issues about which so many Europeans still care. Consummate realpoliticians, the Arab world's rulers could handle those. American power truly married to the right of Muslims to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, however, is unsettling, if not terrifying. A United States willing to commend and protect, within "allied" Muslim countries, America-averse political parties that agree to play by liberal democratic rules would be even worse. President Bush has not yet crossed that red line, but he is close. He has already taken America and American idealism into the Muslim world like no president before. He has given American power a moral edge that it has not had since Reagan; and he has demonstrated more political courage and tenacity in the Middle East than any of his predecessors.

The Middle East's rulers will, of course, decry this new American power as "imperialist" in their officially controlled presses. They will strenuously try to maintain their old, pre-World War II, anti-colonial understanding of "freedom." But they will worry, probably more than they have ever done before, that the Western ideas of democracy and individual liberty have sufficiently penetrated into the body politic over the last 200 years that a successful democratic example in Iraq, combined with the dismal performance of their own political systems, could now overwhelm them. Islamic militants advocating the omnipotence of the Koran have been a serious, though manageable threat to the dictatorships and kingdoms of the Middle East. A new stew of political discord, where Western ideas cohere with Islamic ones, and where a serious democratic ethic takes hold of both religiously defined and more Westernized nationalist associations and political parties, may now be inevitable because of America's triumph in Iraq and the failure of other ideas to successfully manage Middle Eastern nation-states.

Politically and philosophically, the Arab Sunni world is unquestionably lagging behind the Shia Islamic Republic of Iran, which has gone through many of the intellectual vicissitudes of the Renaissance and the Reformation since 1979. It hasn't been a pretty voyage. But it is quite possible that the Sunni Arab world is nevertheless close to a democratic takeoff. Though Arabs usually try to diminish or ignore what takes place in Iran, they have probably paid attention to the travails of the Islamic revolution. They may want to avoid some of the same mistakes. In any case, the Battle of Baghdad could likely be one of the great pivot points in Islamic history. Though one may doubt the sincerity of the rulers of the Middle East who now mimic President Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell about the need for political and economic reforms, the promptness of their response to the American call after 9/11 is probably more than just fear of an angry United States. There is a widespread awareness in the Muslim Middle East that something is seriously wrong with their societies. There is an awareness that something has to give.

Many left-wing and right-wing intellectuals believe that you cannot impose ideas and political systems on foreign lands. Morality aside (it is, of course, never aside), such "imposition" doesn't work, they say, especially not in the Muslim Middle East, which has been so sensitive to foreign intrusion. But the region has been one of the most intellectually absorptive places on earth. That notable absorptive capacity has always been most extreme when Muslims were either conquering or being conquered. One can indeed make an argument, and thoughtful traditionalists often do, that a hallmark of the modern Islamic world is that it has absorbed too much too quickly. The most compelling critique of the notion of a "clash of civilizations" between the West and Islam is that we are not talking about two distinct civilizations clashing with one another. Rather we are talking about one borderless civilization split between two hostile clans. (Students at the Shia religious schools in Najaf in Iraq or Qom in Iran are familiar with the tenets and methodology of Plato and Aristotle; they may well have a better understanding of Western philosophy than many undergraduates at Harvard.) The greatest fear that Iran's revolutionary clerics have is that Iranians are vastly too open to Western ideas (they endlessly talk about the "imposition" of these ideas on the young). They should know: It's impossible to describe the Iranian clergy, especially the revolutionary contingent, without making reference to its Western ideas, sentiments, and reflexes.

The Muslim Middle East has been intellectually

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plugged into the Western world in the most intimate ways for over 200 years. Baathist Iraq, like Baathist Syria, owed its very existence to the successful transfer of fascist principles from Western Europe. Such states as Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt also have been enormously shaped by the importation of Western political ideas. Indeed, it is impossible to describe the regimes, let alone the borders, of any of these countries as homegrown. The authoritarian nature of the traditional Islamic world undoubtedly aided the successful transfer of dictatorial ideologies like fascism, nazism, and communism to the Middle East. But this was by no means a smooth transfer. As Princeton professor Bernard Lewis tirelessly points out, much of the "old" Islamic world, which underscored the duties and responsibilities of the ruler and allowed for enormous personal eccentricity and what we in the West would now call "privacy rights" was razed during the last 100 years. From the late 19th to the mid-20th century, there was nonetheless a more "liberal age" in the Middle East. This period tracked with what some scholars have dismissively described as "Britain's moment in the Middle East." It was a time when you could read the Egyptian newspaper *Al-Ahram* and happily expect to learn something. Progressive liberal ideas among the Middle East's elites then held the high ground or were at least competitive with fascist ideas germinating first with the Young Turk movement of the Ottoman Empire, and later more effectively through Baathist admirers of Vichy France and the Third Reich. The ebb and flow of Western powers has been in great part mirrored politically and intellectually in the Middle East. Islamic militancy, too, was fed, far more than the fathers of modern Islamic fundamentalism would care to admit, by ideas originating in the West.

The triumph of America in Iraq will surely provide the next chapter in the Middle East's political thought. And contrary to what is incessantly described in Europe as a likely anti-Western, fundamentalist blowback from the invasion of Iraq, the ramifications of the war will probably be much more in the other direction. America's unrivaled power will perforce encourage observation and debate. England, France, and the Soviet Union at the apex of their power and their appeal all inspired among the Middle East's Muslims enormous discussions, as the peoples of the region hunted for the secrets of the foreigners' success. Many in the Middle East, especially among Islamic militants, have had for years an ongoing, serious discussion about the United States and its enormous seductive power. When Iran's "reformist" clerical president Mohammad Khatami called for a "dialogue of civilizations" in 1998, he was referring specifically to a debate between believing Muslims and the United States. He was not talking about an exchange between the Muslim world and Europe, which as an intellectual force, in his eyes, is no longer driving Western civilization.

The aftershocks of America's victory in Iraq will surely be felt most powerfully in Iran. The Islamic Republic has become, in large part thanks to the failure of the Islamic revolution, the most secularized country in the Muslim Middle East. Your average Iranian has a much clearer understanding of how and where to separate church and state than does his Egyptian counterpart. An enormous, disruptive imbalance now exists in Iran: While street-level and elite political thought in the country views the undemocratic clerical government as morally and politically dysfunctional, the inflexible governing political class knows full well that it no longer rules with popular assent. This tension cannot indefinitely last, as Iran's dissident and not-so dissident mullahs constantly remind their clerical brethren. Iran's ruling mullahs, who have devoted much of their lives to books, understand and fear the power of ideas and the ramifications of successful political examples probably more than any other rulers in the Middle East. A functioning Iraqi democracy, blessed by Iraq's rival, more politically quietist, Shia clergy, is not something that Iran's clergy can live with. For its own survival, Iran's clergy must challenge the United States in Iraq. Whether it will do so aggressively and violently before it obtains nuclear weapons, which will likely happen in under two years, remains unclear. But America's awesome victory next-door has certainly reminded Iran's mullahs of why nuclear arms are indispensable to their rule at home.

Islamic militants and fundamentalists, who are perhaps the Middle East's most percipient critics of the allure of the United States, know very well the magnetic power generated by America's military, economic, and scientific preeminence. Bin Laden's attacks on the United States were essential for demonstrating that American power could be successfully challenged. Without such terrorism, as bin Laden's life and writings make clear, the call to holy war cannot be sustained. Many left-wing European and American intellectuals may believe that flexing American power is a catalyst for Islamic terrorism. Islamic radicals who grew to manhood during the Clinton years, when the United States ignored or limply responded to lethal assaults against American citizens, diplomats, and sailors, know better. The United States has now put to flight bin Laden and al Qaeda, destroyed the Taliban, put paid to the fundamentalist propaganda that America would suffer the same fate in Afghanistan as had the Soviet Union, easily annihilated Saddam Hussein's armies, and toppled the most feared dictator in the Middle East.

Even the hard-core Islamic radical set must deal with facts on the ground. Death-wish believers, too, need to

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have hope. In 1895, it was good to be a recruiter for the Mahdi, a Sunni messiah who promised to drive the infidel English and their Muslim lackeys from Sudan and Egypt. After the Mahdi's forces took Khartoum and killed General Gordon, tens of thousands of die-hard believers swarmed to the cause. The Mahdist movement effectively fell apart, however, when General Kitchener seized Omdurman in 1898, annihilating the armies of the Mahdi's successor with cannon and Gatling gun. Though Islamic militancy is an enormously resilient force—the internal problems of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and the Muslim community in France are sufficient to keep Islamic extremism alive—we are now dealing with what we might call a "post-Omdurman" situation. The psychological bulwark against Islamic terrorism emanating from the Middle East has been greatly reinforced by America's victory in Iraq. The effect of that victory is probably only slightly less than that of America's direct assault against al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Provided the Bush administration does not prematurely withdraw from Iraq—no single action would diminish the United States more in the eyes of our friends and foes in the Middle East—and provided the administration steadfastly plods onward in a democratic direction in that country, the debate about Iraq in the rest of the Middle East will be fierce. We should stay calm and realize that the fiercer this debate, the more profound its repercussions. We shouldn't be talked into accommodations we will certainly regret.

Though no action could diminish us as much as a premature departure from Iraq, the "road map" for an Israeli–Palestinian peace has all the earmarks of a mess. Even the understandable and commendable desire to help British prime minister Tony Blair should not override common sense. An imposed settlement, which is essentially what the road map devised by the "quartet" is, will not work. If peace is to come to the Israelis and the Palestinians, it will be because the Palestinians collectively, unilaterally, and unqualifiedly have renounced terrorism as a political tool. Given the four primary authors of this road map—the United Nations, the European Union, Russia, and the Near East Bureau in the Department of State (all opponents of the Axis of Evil doctrine and the War on Terrorism applied comprehensively to the Middle East)—it is certain that outside pressure is primarily meant for the "stubborn" Israelis, whom all four have always seen as the principal impediment to "peace."

We could conceivably be back where we were under the Clinton administration: The terrorists on the Palestinian side, and the holy warriors elsewhere in the Middle East, will read American pressure on Israel, and subsequent Israeli concessions, as American weakness before Muslim-Palestinian resistance. If Washington presses on with the road map in the face of further Palestinian suicide bombings—and Secretary of State Colin Powell has already hinted such is his intention—then the Bush administration will fuel the perception of American and Israeli vacillation, thus further fueling holy-warrior attacks on Israel. Fortunately, it appears doubtful that President Bush understands the road map in the way the quartet do. The concessional free-fall that occurred under President Clinton and Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak, which significantly helped limn the image of America in retreat in the Middle East, just isn't likely to recur.

Nor is it likely that the "Atlanticist temptation"—a fairly strong tendency in the foreign-policy establishment to view American foreign policy through a Eurocentric lens—will trip up the Bush administration in Iraq. There are certainly forces within the administration, and voices on both the left and right outside government, who ideally would want to transfer as much postwar responsibility as possible to the Europeans and the United Nations, which would be, of course, an efficient way of wrecking Iraq and America's prestige throughout the Middle East. The penny-wise, pound-foolish principle is always present in American democracy.

But French and German behavior before and during the Iraq war was so abrasive and tactically bizarre (the frenetic intensity of French and German diplomatic efforts to undermine the United States in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East was pointless) that even the most Francophilic diplomat at the State Department has little stomach for kissing and making up. In any case, the French, Germans, and Russians simply don't have the wherewithal to diminish America's *hayba* in the Middle East, even if they collectively *really* try. For the peoples of the region, who are, after all, the folks who count, the "dialogue of civilizations" is, for better or worse, between them and the United States.

Only a few years ago, it was inconceivable for most people to imagine an American liberation of Iraq. September 11 and President Bush's force of will have forever altered the intellectual map of the Muslim Middle East. A second "liberal age" may now be coming to the region. It was perhaps coming in any case, but the events since 9/11 have surely accelerated the process. It is important to remember that the first "liberal age" wasn't pretty. But it was a vastly more appealing time than what came after. With the imminent arrival of nuclear arms to clerical Iran, it's hard to imagine the second "liberal age" coming too soon. A race is on. It's in America's interest wisely and forcefully to speed its arrival. ♦

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Mr. Hariri Goes to Washington

The prime minister's prime real estate

By Richard W. Carlson

According to the *Washington Post*, a fellow you've probably never heard of named Rafik Hariri wants to build a $25 million house in Washington, D.C., a Kennedy Center-scale monument better suited to the banks of the Tigris River. Why did Hariri pay $13 million for the property on Foxhall Road back in 1987? Why does he want to pay $25 million or more to build a 103,667 square-foot house on it now? The answer, self-evidently, is he's a very rich and very conspicuous consumer, who, in this instance, runs a foreign government as if it were his own personal real estate office.

Rafik Hariri is the prime minister of war-torn Lebanon, and, according to *Forbes*, has a personal fortune of about $3.8 billion. "This is a guy who treats all of Lebanon like he owns it personally, his own plaything," says Tony Haddad, president of the Lebanese-American Council for Democracy.

Rafik Hariri

KRT / Frederic Neiringer

Picture Lebanon and you likely conjure images of barbed wire and machine gun emplacements, with a downtown Beirut of collapsed buildings, dust, and the corpses of dogs. No more. Since Hariri took over as prime minister in 1992, he has rebuilt hundreds of acres of central Beirut, although his massive new construction won't benefit the average Lebanese family—they make around $200 a month and couldn't afford the paving stones they'd walk on. It is for Hariri's rich friends and fellow social travelers throughout the Arab world and Old Europe, who might covet the downtown condos facing the sea that sell for $5 million each. Another 150 acres of downtown Beirut waterfront is now being created on landfill atop a former garbage dump by Hariri and his private construction company, Solidere.

The deserted, gutted buildings in central Beirut are about gone, and the rubble has been mostly cleared away. This was done by Hariri and Solidere, which owns, or has owned, almost all of the central district. Hariri seems to have a financial interest in anything that generates a profit in Lebanon, extending even to ownership of the trash collection business and waste containers along the downtown sidewalks. And how did he get his hands around all of downtown Beirut? He took it, some 230 acres, worth close to $2 billion. Actually, the government seized it for him when he became prime minister, taking it away from its many owners by the power of eminent domain, and then handing it over to Hariri's company to develop. It was one of the most valuable land grabs in history.

Hariri tore down hundreds of beautiful but damaged historic buildings, making way for high rises to house the likes of Merrill Lynch (though he did save and rehabilitate a few old jewels). Even a 500-yacht marina, whose ownership was strongly contested, was handed over to Solidere by Hariri's government. Solidere has

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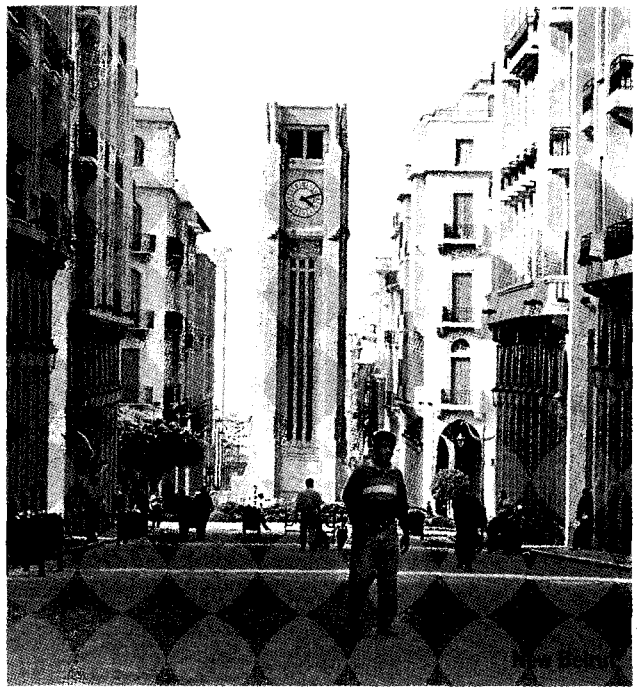
AFP / Ramzi Haidar



Hulton Archive

sold downtown land for hundreds of millions of dollars to European, Kuwaiti, and Saudi investors to build hotels and apartments. Solidere's master plan for downtown Beirut calls for gleaming Riyadh-like offices and condominiums, replacing the Ottoman charm of old Beirut at prices comparable to New York or Cannes, and available only to the very rich. But while Hariri has succeeded in, and has been widely praised for, transforming the bombed-out downtown, he has also saddled Lebanese taxpayers of this and future generations with an enormous, burdensome debt. Much of the borrowed money pays lenders back at very high interest rates. The country's debt by year's end will be $31 billion. The debt service is a staggering $3 billion a year.

One of Hariri's flamboyantly self-promotional websites (he maintains three: *www.rhariri.com*, *www.rafikhariri.org*, and *www.hariri-foundation.org.lb*, all with numerous photos of Hariri, a bear-like man with eyebrows like summer caterpillars) has a flashing opening line that states, "Together For A Better Future." The together part presumably refers to his involuntary partners, the common folk of Lebanon, who will pay down the debt without sharing the profits. A poll from the Lebanese Information Center (LIC) found that more than 40 percent of the Lebanese population would leave the country if they could. Dr. Joseph Gebeily, president of the LIC, says this reflects the widespread and bitter popular resentment of the Hariri government.

In the dozen years since Hariri became prime minister, according to media reports, he has personally profited by $100 million from the redevelopment of downtown Beirut mandated by the government he runs. Astonishingly, U.S. taxpayers have also modestly pitched in. Last month Solidere received a $450,000 federal grant as half payment for a "feasibility study" of possible earthquake problems on the reclaimed waterfront land. U.S. Ambassador Vincent Battle signed the agreement. The grant—from the obscure U.S. Trade and Development Agency—was made to Solidere, although the cash itself was paid to the American company that did the work.

An "independent federal agency" with about 50 employees and a $50 million budget, USTDA has a delicately bureaucratic way of describing why Solidere gets to keep the reclaimed land along the downtown Beirut waterfront. Says a USTDA press release, "In exchange for taking responsibility for all infrastructure requirements within the renewed city center of Beirut, the Lebanese government has granted to Solidere ownership of land it reclaims from the sea." Solidere's 1998 contract for that landfill work—a $53 million job—went to an American company, Radian International of Bethesda, Md., after then USTDA director Joseph Grandmaison, officials of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), and Bill Clinton's Commerce Secretary Bill Daley personally lobbied Rafik Hariri. USTDA threw in some more grant money to Solidere at the same time, about $220,000, "as a condition that they select the American company," said Henry Steingass, USTDA regional director for Africa and the Middle East.

Steingass defended the two U.S. grants as useful both to economic development in Lebanon and to U.S. com-

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panies seeking contracts, although he did allow, when asked about Hariri's conflicts of interest in profiting from Lebanon development, that this is "something we should take a look at." Steingass said he had recently read about the prime minister's proposed Washington palace construction, and it gave him "pause." He said, "I thought, this is not the first foreign leader who doesn't distinguish between public duty and private sector enrichment. He needs to be watched. We should be careful of what we do" with Lebanon.

Cybill Sigler, USTDA's "country officer" for Lebanon, who reports to Steingass, said she had never heard of Hariri's ownership interest in Solidere, or the $25 million house in Washington. "All news to me," she said. "We relied on the U.S. embassy in Beirut for our due diligence, and they never said anything negative." A joke at the World Bank in Washington (but not, apparently, at the U.S. embassy in Lebanon), according to an English banker, is that "Rafik Hariri doesn't run a country, he runs a personal business. He doesn't have a parliament, he has a board of directors—and they're over the border in Syria."

Rafik Hariri, 59, is the son of poor Sunni Muslim citrus farmers in the southern Lebanon port city of Sidon. He went to Saudi Arabia at age 21 as a $120-a-month accountant. Somehow, he insinuated himself into the good graces of the Saudi royal family and became a Saudi citizen (no easy feat). He soon made millions in construction, after contracts were passed to him by King Fahd. Not unlike the fortune Osama bin Laden's family made in construction, the money flowed from Saudi public works projects to build roads, bridges, hospitals, palaces, and hotels, with consistent but unproven allegations of big payoffs to Saudi princes trailing in the energetic Hariri's wake. Hariri's company is now run by his son Saad, a 32-year-old Georgetown University graduate who wears a ponytail and, according to *Forbes* magazine, has invested more than $1 billion of his father's money in telecom companies.

Hariri père has spread money widely. He has engaged in considerable Huey Long-style philanthropy for the Lebanese. He rebuilds schools and renames them after himself, and gives scholarships to Lebanese students, helping place more than 3,000 of them in U.S. colleges and universities through his Hariri Foundation. (This was founded by Hariri in 1979 and originally titled the Islamic Institute for Culture and Higher Education, with offices in Tripoli, the Bekaa Valley, Paris, London, and Washington.) Less philanthropically, the prime minister owns the Banque de la Méditerranée and a lot of the Banque Française de l'Orient, the Arab Bank, Ltd., and the IndoSuez Bank, plus considerable real estate in France, Monaco, Saudi Arabia, and America, including, according to news reports, Houston's $300 million Texas Tower, the tallest building in the city, generating a yearly rental income—75 floors, 1,700,000 square feet of office space—approaching $50 million.

Cash appears to flow in and out of the prime minister's pockets, and in and out of Lebanon, in remarkably large volume. The U.S. Committee for a Free Lebanon (USCFL) tracks money laundering in Lebanon and says that the Medina Bank in Lebanon, in concert with the Syrian government, laundered huge amounts of cash for Saddam Hussein, his family, and the Iraqi government over the past three years, using it to buy real estate and fund building projects in northern Lebanon. They say that Rafik Hariri's Banque de la Méditerranée is "also involved in these large operations." USCFL says that a massive hotel planned for the Lebanon coast, sited to overlook the Mediterranean, is owned by Saddam's crazed (and perhaps late) son Uday.

Hariri's money—or perhaps just his winning personality—has gained him lots of prominent friends, including a long and close relationship with French president Jacques Chirac and his wife Bernadette. They dine together and travel together. A few months ago Hariri visited with the Chiracs one day in Paris and two days later flew to Rome for a personal meeting with the pope. Earlier that same week, Hariri spent two hours with Brigadier Rustom Ghazalead, a Syrian intelligence operative.

The friendship with Chirac paid significant dividends to Hariri last fall. Lebanon was facing financial collapse because of its staggering debt, when Chirac called a meeting of "key donors" at the Elysée Palace in Paris on November 23. Led by Hariri's friends in Saudi Arabia, which kicked in $700 million, the meeting raised over $4 billion in cash, loans, and grants for Lebanon's coffers. Jacques Chirac put the French taxpayers in for $500 million, a sum matched by the European Investment Bank, the Investment Bank of Kuwait, and the Arab Development Fund. The Emir of Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Malaysia all pledged $300 million; Italy, Canada, and Bahrain went in for $200 million each; Japan and the Arab Monetary Fund gave $100 million apiece; Belgium gave $70 million; and the Sultan of Oman got away with a $50 million contribution. The United States, Britain, Germany, and Spain took a pass, even though Hariri had flown to Washington and lobbied President Bush for a contribution. Maybe Mr. Bush had heard of the new house Mr. Hariri is planning for Foxhall Road.

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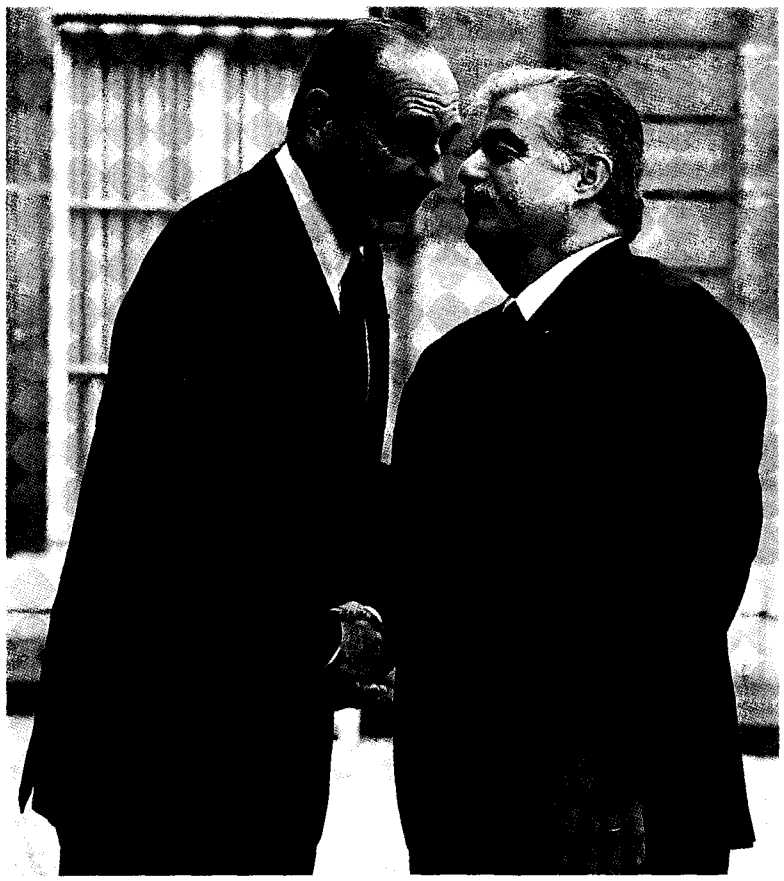
Perhaps unsurprisingly for the prime minister of a country that has been under Syrian occupation for a decade and a half, Hariri is said to have very close ties to Syrian intelligence. "Mukhabarat," military intelligence operatives, are believed to be all over Lebanon, and have control of the country's political and, to some extent, its social and financial life. The Lebanese government suppresses civil liberties like freedom of assembly and speech and the right to form political associations. It controls the media (Hariri personally owns newspapers and TV in Lebanon) and uses widespread wiretapping and surveillance, illegal detention, torture, and death under torture to keep the public in line. When he was appointed prime minister in 1992, the decision had to be approved by Damascus, then in the grip of the wily and dangerous Hafez Assad (whose more effete son, an eye doctor named Bashar Assad, has now inherited his father's throne). Syria was the first nation to be listed by the U.S. State Department as a state sponsor of terrorism and as "a safe haven for terrorist groups."



Getty / Pascal Le Segretain

Pals: Jacques Chirac and Hariri at the Elysée Palace, Feb. 13, 2003

To vet his appointment as prime minister in 1992, Hariri met with Syrian general Ghazi Kenaan, the sinister chief of intelligence, and his Lebanese counterpart General Jamil el-Sayed, head of the General Security Department, who signed off on his new job. The U.S. Committee for a Free Lebanon this week accused el-Sayed of arranging for Lebanese passports for some Iraqi officials who have fled ahead of U.S. troops and are hiding in Lebanon. The committee says this move by Lebanon came after the United States put pressure on Syria, which had itself been issuing passports to Iraq's fleeing Baath party officials.

Aside from lip service, critics say that Hariri has done little or nothing to dislodge the terrorist flora and fauna that thrive in Lebanon—the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hamas, Osbat el-Ansar (which is linked to al Qaeda), the PLP-General Command, and the Hezbollah organization, a favorite of Damascus and comfortably at home in both Lebanon and Syria. A large flashing neon sign in the Lebanese town of Bint Jbail says, "Hezbollah, you honor us throughout the generations."

While Hariri squeezes new personal profits from his job as prime minister, terrorists base themselves in his country with impunity. Prime Minister Hariri is under the sheets with the Syrians, who have long shared their bed with terrorists without the protection of a bundling board.

Here is an idea: Until Lebanon's terrorist havens are cleaned out, Hariri's application to build the $25 million house on the $13 million piece of land in Washington should be put on hold and the land frozen for sale by the federal government. The Bush administration should apply the Patriot Act provision that allows the United States to confiscate assets belonging to foreign countries that aid our enemies to all of Hariri's property, including his luxurious Texas Tower, his fancy new offices in Bethesda, Maryland, and all the other property he has here in America. Let the Justice Department, including the tenacious Ted Greenberg who runs the DOJ money-laundering section, investigate Hariri and his *Forbes* List fortune and how exactly he fell into it.

If Hariri is clean, then let him build his tacky manse in Washington. I'll even send a house-warming gift. If not, grab all his assets in America, sell them, and give the money to the families of victims of terrorism, starting with the families of the U.S. Marines murdered in predevelopment Beirut in October 1983. ♦

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Saudi Arabia's Identity Crisis

A strategic partnership unravels

By Amir Taheri

Riyadh

In Saudi Arabia, it is the end of the lunar month of Safar and the beginning of summer, which will last until October. Traditionally, wealthy Saudis spend at least part of that period abroad, while the less well-to-do trek to the cool oases of the Ta'ef region on the Yemeni border.

This year, however, most wealthy Saudis will stay at home. The reason? They feel they are no longer welcome in their favorite destination, the United States. Or they've decided to wait and see "what happens next."

As one travels around this vast kingdom, almost as big as Europe, the mood is one of quiet concern about a troubling present and an uncertain future. The feeling of uncertainty has just been deepened with the announcement by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld that soon almost all the American troops will be withdrawn from the kingdom.

"This is what Osama bin Laden wanted," says a Saudi university teacher. "People wonder when he will get the other things he wanted, including regime change here."

Many Saudis see Rumsfeld's visit as a historic parting of the ways for two traditional allies. "The Americans now have Iraq and no longer need us," says Abdul-Muhsin al-Mualaa, a businessman. "It is as if the ground has fallen under our feet."

In one of those paradoxes of politics, this birthplace of Islam had developed into the most pro-American of all Muslim countries. In 1991 a decision was made to use the acronym KSA for Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in obvious imitation of the USA. Since 1980, an estimated 200,000 Saudis have studied in the United States, and at least a quarter of a million Saudis have visited the country every year. Saudi investment in the United States is estimated at $300 billion. Prince Walid bin Talal, a nephew of the king, boasts that he is the single biggest foreign investor in New York City. Many top American firms, from Disney to Citicorp, have major Saudi shareholders.

At the other end of the spectrum, Saudi Arabia is the biggest source of American energy imports. It sits upon almost a quarter of the world's known oil reserves, and experts regard the recently developed fields of Shiba as "an almost endless source" of cheap oil. The country's importance as a strategic prize is certain to increase in the coming years as it develops newfound reserves of natural gas.

For over a decade the kingdom played host to the largest American military presence between Europe and the Far East. And it has played another crucial role in American global strategy: that of go-between with the Muslim world. As the site of Mecca and Medina, destination of Islam's two major pilgrimages, and host to almost six million pilgrims each year, Saudi Arabia enjoys immense prestige in the Muslim world—a prestige enhanced by the billions it spends on Islamic charities, Koranic schools, aid projects, and the purchase of patronage throughout the Muslim world.

The "strategic partnership" between Washington and Riyadh began in the 1940s, when the United States first established a military presence in the kingdom. In the 1960s and 1970s the two worked closely to deal with the threat of Arab nationalism, backed by the Soviet Union, and to contain the Palestinian issue. In the 1980s they were partners in stopping the spread of the Khomeinist revolution from Iran to other Muslim countries.

Then came their joint venture in support of the mujahedeen fighting the Soviet army in Afghanistan. Thousands of Saudis went to fight the Communists in Afghanistan or to raise funds and procure arms for the Afghan mujahedeen. Among those who went was Osama bin Laden, member of a wealthy Saudi family of Yemeni origin. So close did the two countries become that Washington consulted with Riyadh even on issues such as defeating communism in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Amir Taheri is an Iranian-born journalist based in Europe.

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Then in 1990-91, the two worked together to force Iraq out of Kuwait. In an important symbolic gesture, the United States made Prince Khaled bin Sultan, a nephew of King Fahd, deputy commander in chief of the allied forces.

The "special relationship" came to an abrupt end when it turned out that 15 of the 19 terrorists who took part in the September 11 attacks were Saudi citizens, some from prominent and wealthy families. As the FBI proceeded to arrest suspects, hundreds of Saudis in the United States were rounded up and thrown into prison. Many managed to escape the dragnet aboard specially chartered flights arranged by the Saudi ambassador to Washington, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, a nephew of the king. Among those who escaped were 18 members of the bin Laden family who had been working or studying in the United States.

Washington retaliated by imposing stiff visa rules for Saudis, reversing a policy under which the kingdom had been among a handful of favored nations. "For many of us the United States has been a second home," says Yahya Al-Muqren, a businessman. "My daughter's godfather is an American. Now she comes to ask me why Americans are killing Muslims."

But the foreign minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal, a nephew of the king, dismisses the current tension as "a rough patch." He insists that the USA and the KSA have too many shared interests to drift apart. "Over 60 years of special relationship is not damaged by occasional problems," he says.

That sentiment is not shared in the mosques and the shopping malls. One common feeling is that the leadership has not yet recovered from the shock of September 11 and its aftermath, including the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

"It is a pity that the king is unwell and apparently not fully informed about what happens," says a senior Saudi on condition of anonymity. "We are used to our leader coming on TV to tell us what to think and how to act. Since September 11, however, we have been receiving conflicting signals from different princes."

That view is disputed by others, who insist that Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz, who is effectively in charge of day-to-day policy, has been right to steer the kingdom away from an open alliance with Washington.

"Abdullah wants the Americans to understand that they cannot have something for nothing," says another senior Saudi figure. "He wants Washington to deliver a solution to the Palestinian conflict before demanding the kingdom's help in other fields."

Abdullah was put in charge of running the country in 1995, at a time when King Fahd was believed to be terminally ill. Since then, the prospect of an early succession has receded. But Abdullah has won popularity by curbing the government's lavish habits, projecting an image of pious austerity, and above all, playing the Islamic card—normalizing ties with Iran, strengthening relations with Syria, and taking a tough anti-Israeli stance.

He has also announced some populist measures, designed to counter the Islamist threat to the regime. Thus, the crown prince has published an ambitious plan for reforming all Arab states, and he has offered to secure the recognition of Israel by all Muslim nations in exchange for the establishment of a Palestinian state.

In addition, Abdullah has opened a dialogue with a group of intellectuals who last winter published an open letter calling for "serious reforms in the kingdom." In a clear signal that he was serious, the crown prince told a delegation of the reformers that he envisaged a major review of the role played by the Consultative Council, the kingdom's appointed 120-man parliament. The review could lead to the election of members and, more significant, the inclusion of women.

Some reformers dismiss the proposed measures as too little, too late. And Abdullah's policies enjoy little support among the estimated 12,000 members of the royal family. Most want no change at all. A small minority wants to go "the whole way towards a constitutional monarchy." But one thing is certain: The family and its hangers-on have a keen instinct for survival and would unite at the first whiff of real danger.

"Those who compare us to the shah of Iran are dead wrong," says a prince. "The shah was a loner with only about 50 close relatives. We are a large, very large, family linked to many clans and tribes. We are the backbone of society. Also, we know how to survive. We survived the challenge of Nasser and communism and the threats of Khomeini and Saddam Hussein. We will get through this one too."

But what exactly is "this one"?

It is the fact that an extremist and violent version of Islam, symbolized by bin Laden, seems to have seduced part of the kingdom's golden youth.

No one knows the extent of bin Laden's actual popularity in Saudi Arabia. What is clear, however, is that, with one or two exceptions, almost no one has dared condemn him in public. The exceptions are Prince Nayef bin Abdul-Aziz, the interior minister, who called bin Laden "a diseased organ that has to be removed" from

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Islam, and former secret service chief Prince Turki al-Faisal, a nephew of the king, who has branded the fugitive "an arrogant coward."

For Saudis, spurning bin Laden is not easy. The bin Laden family is one of the kingdom's wealthiest, with a multi-billion dollar empire that employs some 50,000 people. The bin Laden clan consists of several thousand members at all levels of society and has links of blood or marriage with the ruling family. For many of them, Osama is a family secret. Even if they disapprove, they are not prepared to denounce him from the heart.

By contrast, many preachers at the estimated 25,000 mosques in the kingdom pounced on the September 11 events as an excuse for lashing out against the United States and its policy of "support for the Zionist entity," Israel. So violent were some of these attacks that Crown Prince Abdullah had to call in some of the religious leaders and publicly warn them against "exaggeration and excessive remarks" during Ramadan and on other religious occasions. In the past six months, an estimated 800 state-employed preachers and muezzins (callers to prayer) have been dismissed for their "immoderate language and behavior."

As the hope of landing easy, plum jobs in the government fades, some Saudis are beginning to take up menial jobs previously reserved for foreign "guest workers." A hotel in Jeddah has hired its first Saudi porter.

Nevertheless, audiocassettes containing vitriolic speeches by many sheikhs, notably Safar al-Hawali and Salman al-Awdah, two dissident clerics recently released from prison, still sell briskly in many cities, including the capital, Riyadh. And a fatwa (religious opinion) by the sheikh Hamoud al-Shuaibi is distributed under the counter in many shopping malls and teahouses. In it the blind sheikh condemns American intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq as "a war by the Infidel against Muslims," and states, "Any Muslim who cooperates with the Infidel is an apostate."

More ominous, the Islamic charities, some of which have been accused of raising funds for terrorist operations, continue to function unhindered. The government's promised efforts to "dry up" terrorist funding are in their early stages, according to sources. In any case, the Saudi economy is so open that anyone can send as much money as he likes anywhere in the world without the government learning about it.

Saudi Arabia's identity crisis comes at a time when trouble is brewing on other fronts. In the 1980s the Saudi per capita GDP was around $18,000 a year. This year it has fallen to just under $6,000. Falling oil prices and loss of market share are blamed, while the real explanation is the economy's failure to grow beyond a meager 2.2 percent per year since 1990. And that translates into rising unemployment, especially among young Saudis with college degrees.

As the hope of landing easy, plum jobs in the government fades, some Saudis are beginning to take up menial jobs previously reserved for foreign "guest workers." A hotel in Jeddah has just hired its first Saudi porter. More significant, a restaurant in Mecca has become the first in the kingdom to employ women to wait on tables. The fact that women are not allowed to drive cars or leave home alone means that the kingdom has to employ almost a million guest workers to drive family cars on simple errands like taking the children to and from school and shopping.

Saudi Arabia spends almost a third of its oil income to employ the estimated 5.6 million foreigners who work there. Another third of its oil income goes to buy weapons and service the debts incurred in the 1990-91 war to liberate Kuwait. Then there are the lavish subsidies that the government provides for public services, delivered free or below cost. Once the oil industry's need for continuous investment has been met, there's not much left to spend on new development.

Crown Prince Abdullah has tried hard to attract foreign investment, especially in the energy sector, so far with limited success. Prolonged tension with Washington is sure to harm investment prospects further.

"The kingdom is drifting," says a Western diplomat. "The ruling family may have weathered yet another storm. But it has been left with no coherent foreign policy and a sense of domestic unease." Some Saudis call for "urgent action" to repair relations with the West in general and the United States in particular.

For the time being, many Saudis will have to sweat the summer out at home. They can look forward to a shortened work day of just 4 hours, followed by a 10-hour siesta. This is the season of juicy dates from Qassim, washed down with cups of Arabian coffee. There will be endless games of backgammon to play, with periodic interruptions to watch the latest news on satellite television. As for the rest, only Allah knows what lies in store. ♦

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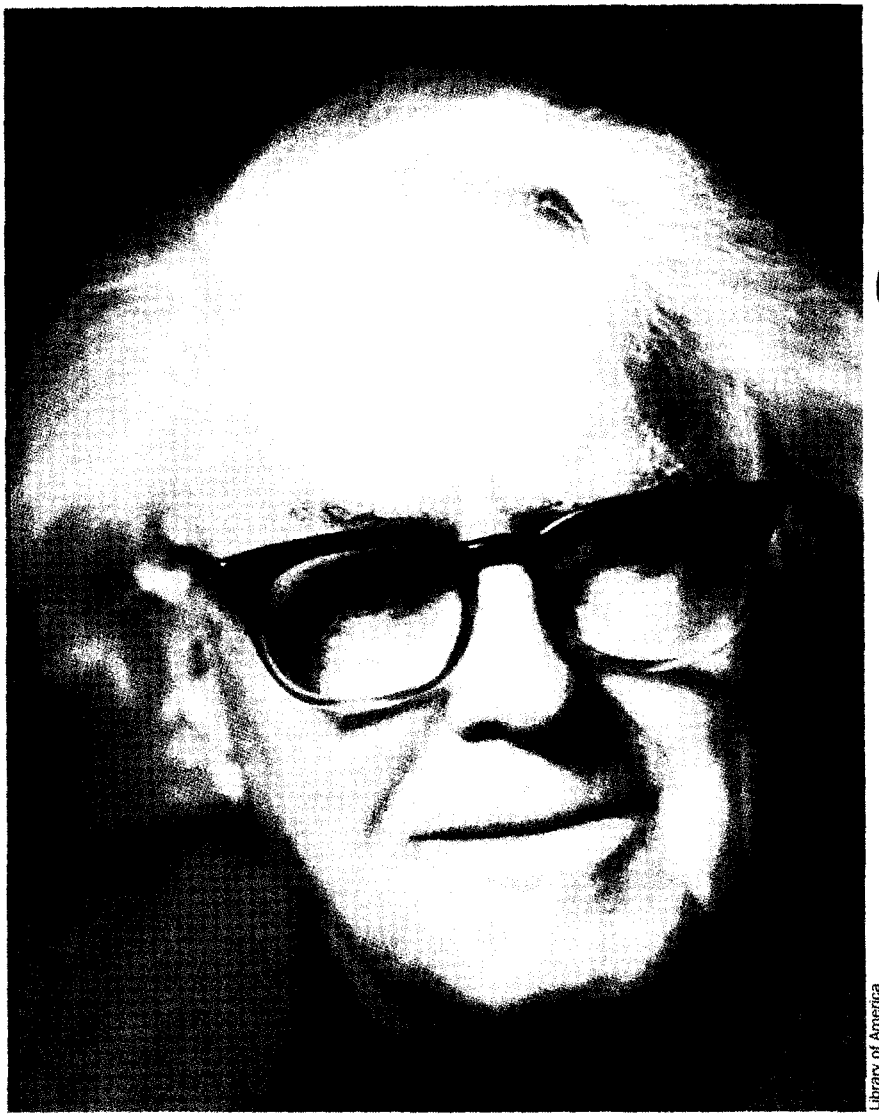
The Return of Karl Shapiro?

The Library of America freshens old laurels

By Joseph Epstein



Library of America

I recently found myself describing someone as a successful poet of no significance whatsoever. Karl Shapiro, a selection of whose poems has just been brought out by Library of America, was just the reverse: an unsuccessful poet of considerable significance. The reasons he was unsuccessful tell a good deal about the state and condition of poetry in our time.

Karl Shapiro, who died in 2000 at the age of eighty-six, wasn't always unsuccessful. In fact, he began dazzlingly. In 1945, he emerged from World War II to win a Pulitzer Prize for his third, excellent book of poems, *V-Letter and Other Poems*. This was at a time when a Pulitzer Prize meant more than it does today. (The usual award of a guinea to anyone who can name three of the last five years' Pulitzer Prize winners in poetry.) He was thirty-two, and the world had already recognized him as a gifted poet, well up to deploying language powerfully on a major subject—in this case, that of living through a war as an enlisted soldier, a medical corpsman. An earlier book had won the praise of Louise Bogan, a poet and critic whose praise lent imprimatur to a young poet as, say, Helen Vendler's tends to do in our own day.

After Shapiro won his Pulitzer, gates opened, invitations were offered, emoluments flashed. He was made consultant in poetry at the Library of Congress in 1946. A writing professorship at Johns Hopkins, in Baltimore, the city of his birth, followed; he was the second Jew to be hired in the history of the Hopkins English Department. From 1950 to 1956, he was the editor of *Poetry*, the oldest and easily most highly regarded magazine devoted to verse in America. Under its founding editor, Harriet Monroe, *Poetry* had published T.S. Eliot, Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens, Marianne Moore, all the great names in modern poetry; its European correspondent was Ezra Pound. The kingdom of poetry in the twentieth century, as in the twenty-first, was always a small one—a mountain principality, really—but Karl Shapiro, not yet forty, had a commanding place in it.

Selected Poems
The American Poets Project, vol. 3
by Karl Shapiro,
edited by John Updike
Library of America, 197 pp., $20

Yet today, when asked to name the key poets of Shapiro's generation, most people at the English-major level of culture would answer Robert Lowell, Elizabeth Bishop, Randall Jarrell, John Berryman, and (less likely) Delmore Schwartz and Theodore Roethke. All were poets who fell to insanity and alcoholism, or, in Wordsworth's phrasing, *in their youth begin in gladness; / But thereof comes in the end despondency and madness*. Karl Shapiro never cracked up. Instead he made a few crucial decisions, took a number of significant positions, that went a long way toward scuppering his career.

Joseph Epstein is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard.

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T.S. Eliot

Before getting on to this, though, it needs to be said that John Updike's compilation of Karl Shapiro's poems—a selection of the strongest poems from the various books of poetry Shapiro published over a long career—is a splendid reminder of how good a poet Karl Shapiro could be. One of the first things to be said about Shapiro's poetry is that, various though it is, it is never gloomy. A pleasure in life, in its richness, variety, and oddity, informs many of his poems, even those that verge on the dark, such as "Auto Wreck," a poem about coming upon an auto crash as a young man on his way home after leaving the bed of a lady friend. The arbitrariness of death by such a cause is what rightly strikes him:

For death in war is done by hands;
Suicide has cause and stillbirth, logic;
And cancer, simple as a flower, blooms.
But this invites the occult mind,
Cancels our physics with a sneer,
And spatters all we knew of denouement
Across the expedient and wicked stones.

Similarly, in a poem called "Hospital," one of the few memorable poems not included in this collection, Shapiro begins by reminding that *Inside or out, the key is pain*, but then goes on to catalogue the abundance of possibilities that lie within the walls of *This Oxford of all sicknesses:/ Kings have lain here and fabulous small Jews / And actresses whose legs were always news*. He could make a poem out of a fly, and in fact did, beginning: *O hideous little bat, the size of snot.*

But I don't want to make Karl Shapiro seem a cheerful or relentlessly upbeat poet. ("Optimists," noted Paul Valéry, "write badly.") He could also be angry, satirical, and smart about his contrarian nature. The prose poem "I Am an Atheist Who Says His Prayers" resounds with this last quality: *I am an anarchist and full professor at that. . . . / Physically a coward, I take on all intellectuals, established poets, popes, rabbis, chiefs of staff.* His sympathies tended to be wide, as a poet's should be; and his poem "Conscientious Objector," written by a man who in combat himself won several Bronze Stars, is better because subtler than E.E. Cummings's famous conscientious objector poem "I Sing of Olaf." Shapiro's poem ends:

You suffered not so physically but knew
Maltreatment, hunger, ennui of the mind.
Well might the soldier kissing the hot beach
Erupting in his face damn all your kind.
Yet you who saved neither yourselves nor us
Are equally with those who shed the blood
The heroes of our cause. Your conscience is
What we come back to in the armistice.

Karl Shapiro wrote no great poems—no "Sunday Morning," no "Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," no "Wreck of the Deutschland," no "Sailing to Byzantium," no "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening—" though in his "Elegy for a Dead Soldier" he came close. Write three or four great poems, and one is, officially, a great poet. But Shapiro wrote lots of good, even excellent poems. And he wrote few poems without a passage or phrase that grips and grabs and causes a reader to marvel. His poems all end well. He was a prosodic master, and in one of his books, *Essay on Rime*, he showed mastery of more kinds of meter than the man from Commonwealth Edison.

The chief poetic influences on Shapiro were probably William Carlos Williams and W.H. Auden. From the first, he picked up confidence in his own Americanness, at a time when almost all other poets wrote with a nervous look over their shoulders to T.S. Eliot in England; an eye for the larger subject inhering in the small object ("no ideas but in things," Williams famously wrote); and a comrade in the campaign against a literary modernism whose program, Shapiro came to believe, meant a death of direct feeling in the composition of poetry. He rated Williams's poetry "over and above that of Pound and Eliot and Cummings and Marianne Moore."

The influence of Auden was very different. In two separate poems, "W.H.A." and "At Auden's Grave," both reprinted in Updike's selection, Shapiro lauds Auden for all he had done to open up poetry to contemporary language and thought. In the first poem, he writes: *God bless this poet who took the honest chances; / God bless the live poets whom his death enhances*. And in the second he adds: *I come to bless this plot where you are lain, / Poet who made poetry whole again.*

While recognizing that "Auden's great achievement . . . is the modernization of diction, the enlargement of dictional language to permit a more contemporary-sounding speech," Shapiro in the end concludes that Auden will be remembered as "a great stylist, not [as a] primary poet, the actual creator of poetry like Hopkins or Rimbaud or, among his contemporaries, Dylan Thomas." He also faults Auden for being the father of the academic poem in which, owing to his overarching irony and other arts of indirection, one finally doesn't know what the poet actually believes.

Ezra Pound

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Shapiro's own beliefs are never in doubt. Nor do many of his poems require what, in the 1950s and 1960s, used pretentiously to be called *explication de texte*. Language, syntax, meaning, all are straightforward enough—all buoyed by precision and an urban comic touch. *It is California in winter and outside / Is like the interior of a florist shop*, is a characteristic opening line. *How do I love you?* begins a poem of that title, and instead of attempting to count the ways, the response is, *I don't even know*.

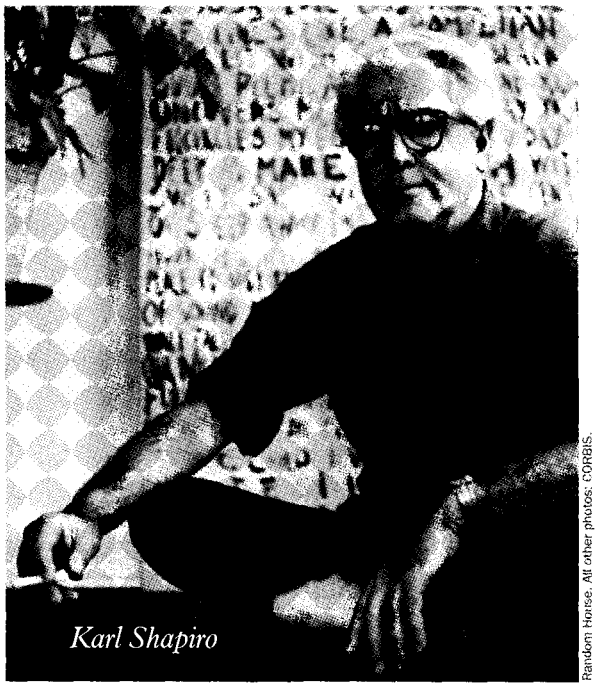
One senses in many of Karl Shapiro's poems that he feels the time to go about the work of being a poet with a straight face has already passed. *We are too rich with books, our blood / Is heavy with over-thought-ful food, / Our minds are gravid—and yet to try / To backtrack to simplicity / Is fatal.* Part of his admiration for William Carlos Williams was because he worked as an obstetrician and was thus able to confront life and draw from it for his writing directly in a way not quite available to the professional poet. "Williams wanted to be a doctor, have a family, live near New York City, and write poetry. As far as anyone knows, he did all these things admirably."

How different from the poets of Shapiro's own generation, where, as he describes the situation in one of the prose poems of *The Bourgeois Poet*, "established poets are forced to wear beards and bluejeans; they are treated kindly in bohemian zoos; mysterious stipends drift their ways." And then there is this, from "The Poetry Reading":

But he who reads thinks as he drones his song:
What do they think, those furrows of faces,
Of a poet of the middle classes?
Is he a poet at all? His face is fat.
Can the anthologies have his birthday wrong?
He looks more like an aging bureaucrat
Or a haberdasher than a poet of eminence.
He looks more like a Poet-in-Residence.

The job of teaching didn't, in Shapiro's case, help. *Now when I drive behind a Diesel-stinking bus / On the way to the university to teach / Stevens and Pound and Mallarmé, / I am homesick for war.*

W.H. Auden said that the right time to be born if one were to be a major poet was between 1870 and 1890, and the remark contains the wistfulness of one—Auden was born in 1907—who feels he came along too late. Something of this spirit also weighs on Shapiro's middle and later poems. Poetry had already lost its audience. To write poetry in America, said Henri Coulette (an American poet despite his Frenchified name), is "like making love to someone sound asleep." Unlike Auden and Coulette, though, Shapiro had an argument for why things went wrong.


Karl Shapiro

Random House. All other photos: CORBIS.

He must have had the first inkling of what it is when, as one of the Fellows of American literature who comprised the jury for the Bollingen Poetry Prize of 1949, he voted against giving the prize to Ezra Pound and found himself alone with one other juror (Katherine Garrison Chapin, who was also Mrs. Francis Biddle) in doing so. In a symposium in *Partisan Review* on the subject of giving an award to Pound, who was then resident in St. Elizabeth's mental hospital in Washington, D.C., Shapiro wrote: "I voted against Pound in the balloting for the Bollingen Prize. My first and more crucial reason was that I am a Jew and cannot honor anti-Semites. My second reason is as I stated in a report which circulated among the fellows: 'I voted against Pound in the belief that the poet's political and moral philosophy ultimately vitiates his poetry and lowers its standards as literary work.' This statement I would place against the official statement of the Fellows, which seems to me evasive, historically untrue, and illogical."

The other members of the panel of jurors were W.H. Auden, Conrad Aiken, T.S. Eliot, Allen Tate, Robert Lowell, Louise Bogan, Robert Penn Warren, Willard Thorpe, Paul Green, Katherine Anne Porter, Theodore Spencer, and Leonie Adams, all of whom took the line that, whatever Pound's politics, his contributions to poetry outweighed them. Shapiro must have felt the loneliness of his decision—I think it was the correct one—and it not only marked him as a man distinctly not traveling with the gang, but must have encouraged the iconoclastic strain that already ran strong in him.

Iconoclasts are never more useful than when there is an abundance of false idols to tip over or smash. Shapiro soon attempted to knock over the largest of them, in what, if he were a White House speechwriter, he might have called the Pound-Eliot Axis. The first thing Shapiro noticed was the tireless log-rolling that Pound and Eliot carried on in each other's behalf, with each poet regularly pumping up the other's achievements and talents. Eliot, for example, called Pound's *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* a great poem, to which Shapiro appends the comment that "no one but T.S. Eliot would ever call it a good, much less a great poem." Together Pound and Eliot created what he called "a kingdom of Modern Poetry in which T.S. Eliot is the absolute monarch and Archbishop

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William Carlos Williams

of Canterbury in one." He pronounced Eliot "a thoroughgoing anachronism in the modern world, a poet of genius crippled by lack of faith and want of joy."

When Ezra Pound, coming on as a revolutionary, talked about "making it new" in poetry, he meant creating a poetry that would make use of colloquial American speech, tossing standard iambic pentameter overboard and abandoning the tradition of English verse that began in the fourteenth century with Chaucer. It hasn't worked out that way; instead the Pound-Eliot Axis has succeeded, with the aid of the academic New Critics, in creating a poetry where ideas and symbols replace feeling and pure love of language.

Shapiro published his attacks on Eliot and Pound in a collection of essays with the ill-chosen title *In Defense of Ignorance*. What he intended by the title was his preference for freshness and direct experience over the intellectual desiccations of Eliot and the righteous wrongness of Pound. But the title *In Defense of Ignorance*, which shows Shapiro letting his iconoclasm run away from him, was equivalent to writing a book favoring integration and entitling it *In Defense of Racism*. When the book first appeared in 1960, various critics and poets very much with the gang lined up to kick its author in the most tender places.

Today Shapiro's arguments seem more cogent than ever. Looking back on the history of twentieth-century poetry, one realizes that what Pound and Eliot accomplished, along with the building up of their own reputations, was removing poetry "from the people" and delivering it "to the classroom." They destroyed, Shapiro felt, "all emotion for poetry except for poetry arising from ideas." The joining of Eliot and Pound to the New Critics, in Shapiro's view, entailed "the voluntary withdrawal of the audience" from poetry, in which "critics have created an academic audience, that is, a captive audience." I.A. Richards, one of the leading figures among the New Critics, Shapiro called "the man who tried, and almost succeeded, in driving the poetic mind into the test tube." F.O. Matthiessen lined up for the Eliot-Pound program, even though his leftist politics couldn't have been more different than theirs. But, then, just about everyone signed up in those days, and down to the present not many have resigned.

Did poetry in America ever have a wider audience than the one provided by the classroom? Difficult to say. But there were times when men and women who liked to think themselves cultivated felt they ought to know poetry, if only because, in Ezra Pound's definition, "great literature is simply language charged with meaning to the utmost degree," and nowhere was it

W.H. Auden

Robert Lowell

more highly charged than in poetry. I recall Paul Freund, the Harvard Law School professor, telling me that he read and loved the poems of Wallace Stevens. My guess—though I hope I am wrong—is that no one on the Supreme Court today knows who Wallace Stevens is. Poetry receives its spurts of attention, but spurts they remain. Shapiro mentions Dylan Thomas, who, he says, "made a jump to an audience which, we have been taught to believe, does not exist." But serious poetry today is chiefly an academic matter, a cult interest, presided over by teacher-priests, village explainers, to a transient audience of students, who, once out of the university, never have to deal with it again, and usually don't.

The dividing line, the point at which poetry became wholly of academic interest was the publication and critical success of Eliot's *The Waste Land*, a poem that needed to be read under conditions laid down by the academic Sanhedrin. William Carlos Williams felt that the poem was "the great catastrophe," adding, "it wiped out our world, as if an atom bomb had been dropped upon it. . . . I felt at once that it had set me back twenty years. . . . Critically Eliot returned us to the classroom just at the moment when I felt that we were on the point of an escape." Shapiro writes that "had Williams been as good a theoretician as he was a poet he would probably be the

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most famous American poet today." But it was Eliot, an even better theoretician than poet, who was left to take on his self-appointed critic's job of, in his own phrase, "correcting taste." And correct it he did, insofar as possible, to resemble his own.

Karl Shapiro was a lively and slashing critic, and reading him one feels windows opening, clouds passing, sunlight, and a fresh breeze entering the room. Alas, he is more impressive on the attack than on the defense. What he chooses to defend is the tiresome, let 'er rip, standard team of literary romantics: Blake, Whitman, D.H. Lawrence, & Co. In this mode he wrote an essay entitled "The Greatest Living Author," who turns out to be the novelist Henry Miller, about whom Shapiro wrote: "I claim that Miller is one of the few healthy Americans alive today; further that the circulation of his books [this was written while Henry Miller's novels were still censored in the United States] would do more to wipe out the obscenities of Broadway, Hollywood, and Madison Avenue than a full-scale social revolution." Shapiro did not usually lapse into such mega-clichés. A pity, too, that he allowed himself to get caught in the game of choosing sides. In many fields, neither of the two contending sides is worthy of the allegiance of an intelligent person. Some kinds of ignorance are indefensible.

Shapiro himself, as he grew older, was perhaps rather too hipped on sex; he wrote a light porno novel called *Edsel*, which I read when it was published in 1971 and am pleased to have forgotten almost in its entirety. Of his literary enemies, he wrote: "Pound is sexless, Eliot ascetic, Yeats roaring with libidinal anguish." In what he calls "the religion of modern poetry," he claimed "the Trinity is composed of Pound, Eliot, and Yeats," though he cut Yeats greater slack, writing that he "was never happy in the company of either" Eliot or Pound and, despite his confused turn to magic and mysticism, was a greater poet than both.

Intellectual courage was required for Shapiro to say the things he did, and for doing so he was, in effect, read out of the grand lodge of established poets. In 1976, John Updike notes, Karl Shapiro was dropped from the *Oxford Book of American Verse*, in which, in earlier editions, he had had a prominent place. His teaching jobs were at less than the best brand-name universities: Nebraska, then the University of California at Davis. His books of poems, although they continued to be printed, were reviewed harshly, then increasingly ignored. His sense of his own declining status is nicely caught in a poem, very much in the Shapiro spirit, entitled "My Fame's Not Feeling Well," which ends: *Sloth, acedia, ennui, otiose pride / Got it into this fix, so let it be. / I'm not one to take its history.*

Publication of Karl Shapiro's poetry by the Library of America for its new "American Poets Project," well selected and gracefully introduced by John Updike, will doubtless revive Shapiro's fame—though for how long, who can say? The hope of permanent fame may be the second-silliest motive for a career in poetry; the first is, of course, the hope for riches. Karl Shapiro wrote the best poems he could, and his best were extraordinarily good; and in prose he never wrote anything he didn't believe, a practice not many poets have been able, or appear even to try, to maintain. He plied his craft with the honor that only complete integrity brings—and next to this, fame, passing or permanent, seems a small and shriveled thing. ♦

At the Helm

Richard Helms, a man of honor in an unlikely trade.

BY ROBERT D. NOVAK

In March 1997, when George J. Tenet became the fifth of Bill Clinton's choices to head the Central Intelligence Agency, morale at the agency was poor after the nineteen-month tenure of Tenet's predecessor, former MIT chemistry professor John Deutch, who broke the law by taking home highly classified material in his laptop computer. The youngest director of the agency ever at age forty-four, Tenet had spent most of his career as a congressional staffer and went on the CIA payroll for the first time in 1995 when Clinton named him deputy director.

A Look over My Shoulder
A Life in the Central Intelligence Agency
by Richard Helms
Random House, 512 pp., $35

To gain credibility within the CIA, Tenet turned to Richard Helms. Helms, the first CIA career professional to become director, was a hero to the agency's faceless and nameless workers—and to Tenet as well. So, upon becoming director, Tenet made a symbolic gesture, taking the portrait of Helms out of a hallway at the CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia, and putting it in his private office. As director, Tenet conferred regularly with Helms. After Helms died in his sleep at age eighty-nine last October, Tenet eulogized him at the funeral as "the complete American intelligence officer." The CIA's old boys agreed.

Beginning in 1966, Helms served seven years as director (second only to the legendary Allen Dulles's eight years), but his time was not marked by spectacular intelligence triumphs. Vietnam moved toward a Communist victory, a far left Castroite president was elected in Chile, and the table was set for congressional degradation of the CIA. Why then is Helms an intelligence hero? Because, unlike a notorious successor, he did not surrender the

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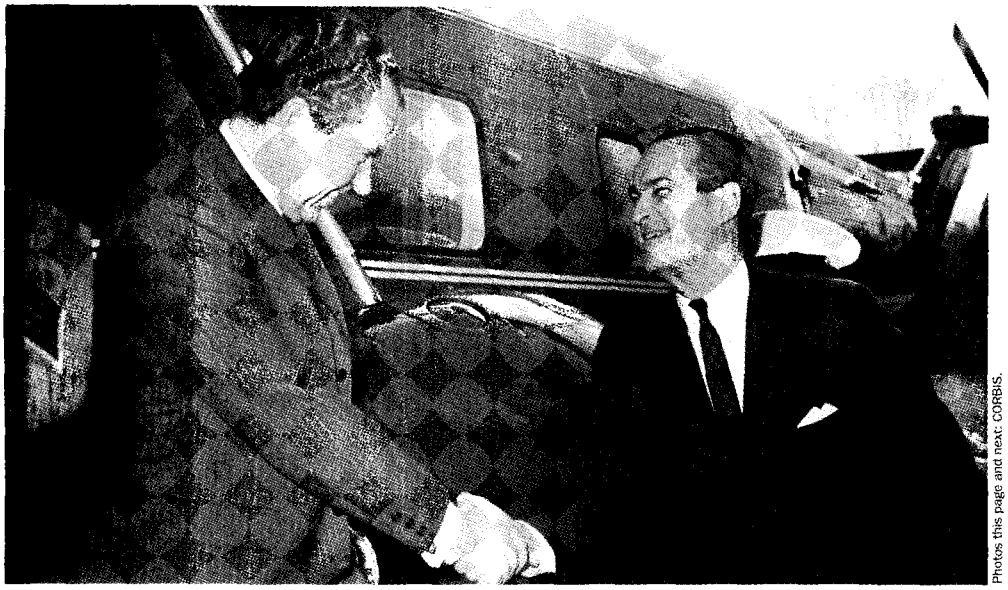

Photos this page and next: CORBIS.

Nixon greets Helms . . .

agency's "family jewels." He endured federal prosecution and risked a jail sentence to protect those secrets. Journalist Thomas Powers aptly entitled his 1979 biography of Helms, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets*.

Helms seems, in fact, the last person likely to have written a memoir of his days in the intelligence business. Helms himself even appears surprised. "This is a memoir that I never expected to write" are the opening words of *A Look over My Shoulder*. He apparently wrote it because "some of my former colleagues had been more forthcoming" than he in talking to Powers thirty years ago, and he belatedly wanted to correct the record.

Helms and his collaborator, a former CIA colleague turned novelist named William Hood, were intelligence professionals even in writing the book, and they are careful not to tell too much. Yet this posthumous memoir contains important and fascinating revelations, as in the portrayal of presidents who did not understand the CIA's mission and tried to exploit it for their political interests. This criticism is ironic coming from Helms, who always insisted that the director of the CIA was the servant of whoever happened to be the president. He makes clear he did nothing as director that was not ordered by either of the two presidents he served under, Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. Senator Frank Church's description of the CIA as a "rogue elephant," damaging to the nation's long-term intelligence capabilities, was unfair and inaccurate.

As president, Kennedy and Johnson appear out of control about their obsessions (Cuba for Kennedy, Vietnam for Johnson). But Nixon was the worst. He unfairly suspected Helms of being partial to the Democrats and became convinced of it when Helms refused to participate in the Watergate coverup. Helms discloses that Nixon, while telling hardly anyone else in the government, "ordered me to instigate a military coup" in Chile—an order that led to the eventual criminal prosecution of Helms.

The man who kept secrets actually began his career as a journalist, a United Press correspondent in Berlin (who, with other reporters, lunched with Adolf Hitler in 1936). His goal of owning his own newspaper was interrupted by World War II—which changed his life forever. As a Naval officer, he was assigned to the OSS (predecessor of the CIA) and began three decades in intelligence.

Tall and elegant, he was an accomplished dancer and a fixture at Washington dinner parties. He was a frequent luncheon companion of such columnists as Joe Alsop (which aroused President Johnson's ire, Helms reports) and Rowland Evans. Helms was a calming element among turbulent and erratic personalities at Langley. Although covert operations undermined his reputation, he makes clear he always emphasized intelligence gathering as the agency's principal mission. He implies some distaste even for the celebrated CIA-induced "revolution" ousting Guatemala's elected leftist government in 1954.

Helms is revealing about the most famous failed covert operation of all time: the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba ("a foreign policy disaster and a humiliating experience for the country"). In contrast to forty years of Kennedy hagiography, he reports "it was President Kennedy who . . . canceled the essential air cover"—dooming the operation. The CIA took the fall, with Allen Dulles among the casualties, but Helms was not involved in Bay of Pigs planning. What followed was "relentless pressure" on the CIA from Attorney General Robert Kennedy to get rid of Castro.

Helms also gives the CIA much credit for handling the Cuban missile crisis. John McCone, a conservative Republican industrialist who had replaced Dulles as the agency's director, was the administration's "one dissenting voice" from the view that the Cuban missiles were "defensive." Furthermore, Helms says, the missile threat would not have been identified in time without CIA secret agent Oleg Penkovsky in Moscow. McCone was also right about Vietnam. Helms reveals a McCone memorandum, hand-carried to President Johnson, warning, "we will find ourselves mired in combat in the jungle in a military effort we cannot win, and from which we will have extreme difficulty in extracting ourselves." That was not the news Johnson wanted, and he proceeded to ignore the CIA director he had inherited from Kennedy. With "his patience exhausted," McCone resigned in April 1965.

Helms speculates that Johnson "never forgot that McCone was a conservative Republican," and the president picked as his replacement retired Admiral William (Red) Raborn, a fellow Texan who had supported Johnson's 1964 presidential candidacy. Renowned as the developer of the Polaris missile system, Raborn knew nothing about intelligence and relied heavily on newly named deputy director Helms. "Clear that President Johnson had thrust him into the wrong job," Raborn resigned after fourteen months, and Helms replaced him.

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"Vietnam was my nightmare," Helms writes, and Johnson would still not accept the CIA's projections of defeat. But Johnson was a joy for Helms, compared with his successor. President Nixon retained Helms at the CIA for the sake of stability, while intending to reduce his role sharply. "Nixon never appeared to have shaken his early impression that the agency was exclusively staffed by uppity Ivy Leaguers, most of whom lived in Georgetown and spent every evening gossiping about him in cocktail parties," Helms writes. Not until he fired Helms did Nixon learn he was a civil servant. Indeed, Nixon may never have realized that Helms, despite his upper-class background, was not a man of wealth and lived on his modest government salary.

. . . while Reagan honors him.

The always-shaky relationship with Nixon became untenable with the Watergate burglary in 1972. On June 23, Helms was summoned to the White House and instructed by Nixon aide H.R. Haldeman to tell the FBI to call off its Watergate investigation because it would unravel Bay of Pigs secrets. "'The Bay of Pigs hasn't got a damned thing to do with this,' I said," Helms recalls. Contrary to Haldeman's memoir, "I did not shout in the White House and cannot even remember ever having shouted in my own office." This blatant attempt to obstruct justice was the smoking gun that doomed the Nixon presidency.

Nixon was not finished. The White House twice demanded that the CIA provide money out of its unvouchered funds to bail out the Watergate burglars. Helms refused, sealing his doom once Nixon was reelected in November. Indeed, Nixon summoned the director to Camp David soon after the 1972 election and fired him. Helms asked whether his departure might be postponed until March 30, 1973, his sixtieth birthday when he would be required to retire from the CIA after thirty years of service. Helms writes that Nixon agreed—and, then, impulsively sought to ease the pain by asking whether Helms would like to be an ambassador. "What about Moscow?" the president asked. Commenting that the Russians might not welcome an American spymaster in the Kremlin, Helms suggested Iran.

Helms, however, was not warned when his successor was unveiled February 2. He asked Haldeman what happened to their agreement for delay, and the White House chief of staff replied, "Oh, I guess we forgot," speaking, Helms said, "with the faint trace of a smile." This was, Henry Kissinger writes in the foreword to Helms's book, "a move of surpassing pettiness.

Viciousness soon replaced pettiness. Senate Foreign Relations chairman J.W. Fulbright, pursuing long-frustrated ambitions to wrest intelligence oversight from the Armed Services Committee, turned the confirmation hearing on Helms's appointment as ambassador to Iran into an inquisition of the CIA. Senator Stuart Symington, who had been thoroughly briefed on covert activities in Chile undertaken by the CIA by orders of three presidents, asked Helms questions that required him either to lie or break the vows of secrecy. The man who kept secrets was trapped.

Helms's testimony was the thin edge of the wedge, beginning a cumulative process that ravished the CIA. Helms was not a vindictive or even a combative man, and the only character in this book for whom he has not one kind word is the CIA director named by Gerald Ford while Helms was in Tehran: William Colby, a fellow agency careerist. Colby released to congressional investigators a flow of CIA secrets—which Helms compares to the Bolshevik publication of Tsarist secret police files, asserting that Colby "effectively smashed the existing system of checks and balances protecting the national intelligence service."

With the revelation of covert operations denied under oath by Helms, Colby also passed along the helpful suggestion that his predecessor should be indicted, and both the Ford and Carter administrations adamantly pursued his prosecution. Eager to avoid an embarrassing trial, Carter's Justice Department offered a plea bargain, reducing the charge to a misdemeanor to be punished by a $2,000 fine and a suspended two-year sentence. Helms accepted, but Judge Barrington Parker thought it necessary to declaim in open court that the former CIA director stood "before this court in disgrace and shame." Helms later told reporters: "I don't feel at all disgraced. Had I done anything else, I would then have been disgraced."

Many of the old, nearly forgotten battles related in *A Look over My Shoulder* are relevant to today's concern about CIA capabilities in the war on terrorism. The indiscreet use of the agency by presidents and the witch hunt in Congress inflicted grave damage on the nation's security that has yet to be fully repaired. George Tenet is correct that Dick Helms was a heroic figure, and his unexpected testimony from the grave is a cautionary tale for current and future occupants of the White House and the Capitol. ♦

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Elementary Holmes

Arthur Conan Doyle's imitators have always faced a difficult task. **BY JON L. BREEN**

Sherlock Holmes may not be the greatest character in English fiction, but he has surely attracted the most enthusiastic and industrious admirers. These acolytes often express their devotion in two kinds of writing: mock scholarship, eventually wearying to all but the most fully-immersed specialist, and pastiche, appealing to a wider readership.

Sherlockian scholarship assumes that the Baker Street detective and his companion Dr. Watson were real people, not products of Arthur Conan Doyle's imagination, and that any inconsistencies in the four novels and fifty-six stories published between 1887 and 1927 were not merely the product of Doyle's haste and fallible memory.

My Sherlock Holmes
Untold Stories of the Great Detective
by Michael Kurland
St. Martin's Minotaur, 370 pp., $24.95

G.K. Chesterton's Sherlock Holmes
edited by Steven Doyle
Baker Street Irregulars, 81 pp., $35

Oxford undergraduate Ronald A. Knox started it all in 1912 with his satirical "Studies in the Literature of Sherlock Holmes," following the trend in criticism "by which we treat as significant what the author did not mean to be significant, by which we single out as essential what the author regarded as incidental."

Others approached the game in the same playful spirit: Anthony Boucher contended that the Holmes who returned after his supposed death at Reichenbach Falls was an impostor; Christopher Morley thought Holmes might have been an American; and in the most notorious and broadly comic example, Rex Stout asserted that "Watson Was a Woman."

Great fun, but as these efforts became more esoteric, and it became less certain their authors were kidding, casual readers dropped away. In his 1935 essay "Sherlock the God," G.K. Chesterton observed, "It is getting beyond a joke. The hobby is hardening into a delusion." (That essay plus several others by and about Father Brown's creator are included in the small but substantial *G.K. Chesterton's Sherlock Holmes*, centered on his unfinished illustrations for a never-realized 1930s edition of the Holmes stories.)

Pastiches—new adventures written in serious imitation of the originals—have much broader appeal. The best early example was Vincent Starrett's *The Adventure of the Unique Hamlet* (1920). Later, *The Case of the Man Who Was Wanted*, published under the Doyle name in a 1948 issue of *Cosmopolitan* as a newly discovered Holmes story, was subsequently proven to be a pastiche written by architect Arthur Whitaker.

For many years, the protective Doyle estate discouraged pastiche writing, finding a way to suppress Ellery Queen's 1944 anthology *The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes* and authorizing only *The Exploits of Sherlock Holmes* (1954), a collaboration of Conan Doyle's son Adrian and John Dickson Carr. The earliest novel-length pastiches, H.F. Heard's *A Taste for Honey* (1941) and its sequels, hid a retired Sherlock behind an alias, Mr. Mycroft, borrowed from the smarter but lazier Holmes brother.

Basil Rathbone as Sherlock Holmes. CORBIS.

Nicholas Meyer's *The Seven Percent Solution* (1974) began the still-surging flood of novel-length pastiches. Meyer pioneered the now common practice of inserting real-life contemporaries, including Sigmund Freud and (in the 1976 *The West End Horror*) Bernard Shaw, Gilbert and Sullivan, and Oscar Wilde.

Others would involve Holmes in true crime cases, most frequently Jack the Ripper but also the Dreyfus case, in Michael Hardwick's excellent *Prisoner of the Devil* (1980), and even the Kennedy assassination in Edmund Aubrey's fanciful *Sherlock Holmes in Dallas* (1980). Holmes also entered other fictional worlds, as in Loren Estleman's *Sherlock Holmes vs. Dracula; or The Adventure of the Sanguinary Count* (1978) and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Holmes* (1979).

Those writing an extended series of pastiches frequently adopt a trademark

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slant. In a couple of admirably executed if unlikely variants, Larry Millett brings Holmes and Watson to Minnesota for several cases, while Laurie R. King gives the older Holmes a new Watson in the unexpected person of a wife. Some of the best pastiches, such as those of L.B. Greenwood, shun all of these gimmicks in favor of wholly fictional cases in Watson's familiar voice and milieu.

While some writers ill-advisedly put Holmes and Watson in the overstuffed novels favored in the current market, others have continued in the shorter length Doyle favored, notably June Thomson and Donald Thomas. Others have appeared in five original anthologies from book-packager Martin H. Greenberg, including pastiches from authors as varied as Anne Perry, Bill Crider, Carolyn Wheat, Edward D. Hoch, Peter Lovesey, Dorothy B. Hughes, Stephen King (and my own contributions to the genre). The most recent is *Murder, My Dear Watson* (2002), edited by Greenberg, Jon Lellenberg, and Daniel Stashower.

In gathering stories for *My Sherlock Holmes*, editor Michael Kurland laid down this rule: While Holmes must appear, the viewpoint character is not Watson but some other figure from the canon. Thus, stories are narrated by secondary characters from Mrs. Hudson to Billy the page. In Richard Lupoff's opening story, one of the collection's strongest, Edgar Allan Poe's Parisian sleuth Dupin not only responds to Holmes's slighting remarks about him in *A Study in Scarlet* but recounts an adventure they shared. Two of the stories are from established series: Kurland's about Professor Moriarty and Michael Mallory's about Amelia (the second Mrs.) Watson. Some of the others appear intended to herald sequels.

It's inevitably a mixed bag, but pleasurable on balance. Mel Gilden presents a reasonable solution to the mystery of James Phillimore, "who, stepping back into his house to get his umbrella, was never more seen in this world," and also addresses the obvious charge that Phillimore's illusion could never have fooled Holmes. Linda Robertson's story takes the form of a women's magazine interview with Mrs. Hudson, in which startling revelations about the Baker Street landlady give the sheltered interviewer more than she bargained for. Peter Tremayne, whose novels and stories about seventh-century Irish sleuth Sister Fidelma are gems of historical detection, wins the prize for scholarship, filling his clever tale of Colonel Sebastian Moran with arcane facts and sending the reader to a specialized dictionary for the final revelation. The late George Alec Effinger describes, through the eyes of Reginald Musgrave, Holmes's encounter with Sax Rohmer's Dr. Fu Manchu. The final piece, by C.D. Ewing, presents a comic profile of Holmes, ostensibly from a 1907 issue of *Hogbine's Illustrated Monthly*, including irreverent views from Scotland Yard's Lestrade, Watson literary agent Doyle, and others.

Inappropriate period language is a frequent pitfall. Norman Schreiber's story, told by Wiggins of the Baker Street Irregulars and involving an encounter with Lewis Carroll, puts a grammatical atrocity into Holmes's mouth: "[Y]our little foray into matchmaking pleased Reverend Dodgson and I no end." Gary Lovisi's Mycroft Holmes narrative includes such anachronistic terms as *upbeat*, *scenario*, *nonevent*, and *freelance* as a verb. Even the highly literate editor comes up with the bizarre infinitive "to trod."

These lapses won't bother some readers. August Derleth, the prolific Wisconsin author who wrote about Holmes surrogate Solar Pons from the late 1920s until his death in 1971, often allowed Americanisms and other solecisms to creep into his stories, but when a "corrected edition" was posthumously published, fans objected. For many lovers of Holmes, even those pastiches that are not, objectively speaking, very good are made pleasurable by the shared enthusiasm of their authors. ♦

Bandito!

Joaquin Murieta and California stealin'.

BY STEVEN F. HAYWARD

Most books on cultural studies, whether from the right or the left, tend to be ideological jeremiads, blasting away from entrenched positions of Marxist-inspired oppression or traditional American individualism. It is notable, therefore, to come across a cultural study that is understated and subtle, which are only two of the laudatory adjectives that can be applied to Bruce Thornton's fascinating *Searching for Joaquin*.

Searching for Joaquin
Myth, Murieta, and History in California
by Bruce Thornton
Encounter, 185 pp., $26.95

Searching for Joaquin recounts the murky tale of Joaquin Murieta, who can be thought of as the Mexican version of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. In the hurly-burly years of California's Gold Rush era in the early 1850s, Murieta led a gang of bandits that roved throughout California, robbing ranchers and mining camps, engaging also in killing sprees that were not atypical of this violence-ridden time. The rampage became sensational news throughout the state, leading to the creation of the California Rangers in emulation of the more famous Texas Rangers. A company of Rangers finally tracked Murieta and

Steven F. Hayward, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and author of The Age of Reagan, *divides his time between Washington, D.C., and his native California.*

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his gang to a remote spot on the west side of California's central valley known as Cantua Creek in July 1853. There the Rangers shot and killed Murieta and most of his fellow bandits.

The story might have ended there but for the strange sequel. The leader of the Rangers, Harry Love, decided to cut off Murieta's head as proof they had gotten their man. The head was preserved in whiskey in a large bottle, put on display to the public (for $1 admission), and finally exhibited in a San Francisco saloon and later a museum, where it could still be viewed as late as the 1906 earthquake. This macabre souvenir, along with doubts about the facts of the Murieta gang and its demise, led to a spawning of romantic legends about Murieta that continue to evolve and resonate today.

Who was Joaquin Murieta? Was he really responsible for all the crimes attributed to him? Even the outline of the story recounted above is subject to dispute. A lack of hard facts led to the creation of a Joaquin legend made up from whole cloth, chiefly by journalists and dime-novel authors seeking to profit from sensationalizing the story. Thornton brings genuine artistry to the exploration of this story, placing the unfolding Joaquin legend in the historical context of a time of racial conflict and rough frontier justice. Above all, Thornton uses the Joaquin legend as a lens to sharpen our understanding of the turbulent character of California in the aftermath of its Gold Rush transformation; the unfixed and protean character of the Joaquin legend is a metaphor for the impermanence of California itself.

This is not a new theme, of course. California's transient character was noted as far back as the mid nineteenth century. Josiah Royce, the most prominent philosopher to come out of California, noted in the 1890s that a child in California "grows up amid a community that is a few years older than himself, and not as old as his eldest brother." Californians, Royce wrote, are "wanderers without a community, sojourners with a dwelling place, but with no home."

Royce's contemporary George Santayana had similar impressions of California, telling an audience at Berkeley in 1911 that "everywhere is beauty and nowhere permanence, everywhere an incipient harmony, nowhere an intention, nor a responsibility, nor a plan." Something about California—perhaps its relentless sunshine and agreeable climate—causes people to, in historian Kevin Starr's words, "overreach for Arcadia," only to end, as with all utopian hopes, in disappointment.

Such disappointment has been politicized in recent decades through identity politics and racial grievance. And so it is not surprising that the image of Joaquin evolved from an outlaw seeking vengeance to a revolutionary figure exacting retribution for the racial injustices visited upon Mexicans in California—a kind of Mexican Robin Hood. (Never mind that most of Murieta's victims were poor Chinese miners and not landed gringos.)

In the 1960s the revolutionary Joaquin became a figure of inspiration for farmworker union organizers and the burgeoning Chicano movement.

"Scholars influenced by postmodernist and multiculturalist approaches to history have also discovered a fertile field in the Murieta legend," Thornton writes. "In the privileged enclaves of the university, Murieta functions as a compensatory daydream of unjust victimization and retributive justice that is gratifying to professors with 401K pension funds and to law-abiding students who will become teachers and nurses."

Thornton's complaints about the pseudo-scholarly and political debauching of the Murieta legend are remarkably restrained. Aside from a few animadversions about leftist academic and political habits, Thornton makes clear that any attempt to adapt Murieta for purposes of identity politics ends up diminishing the Murieta story—and what it can tell us about California, if we approach Murieta's legend in all its facets instead of shoehorning him into preconceived ideological categories.

Most accounts declare that the bottled head of Murieta was destroyed in the great San Francisco earthquake. Yet a man named Walter Johnson in Santa Rosa claimed an ancestor had rescued the head from the quake, and still had it in his possession in the 1970s. (He later buried it in an undisclosed location after being pestered by the county health department for keeping human remains.)

Skeptics often claimed that the head Johnson kept was a wax imitation, but Johnson declined to allow it to be examined. "If it's a fake, I don't want to know it," Johnson said, which Bruce Thornton thinks is "a fitting motto for the Murieta legend itself." ♦

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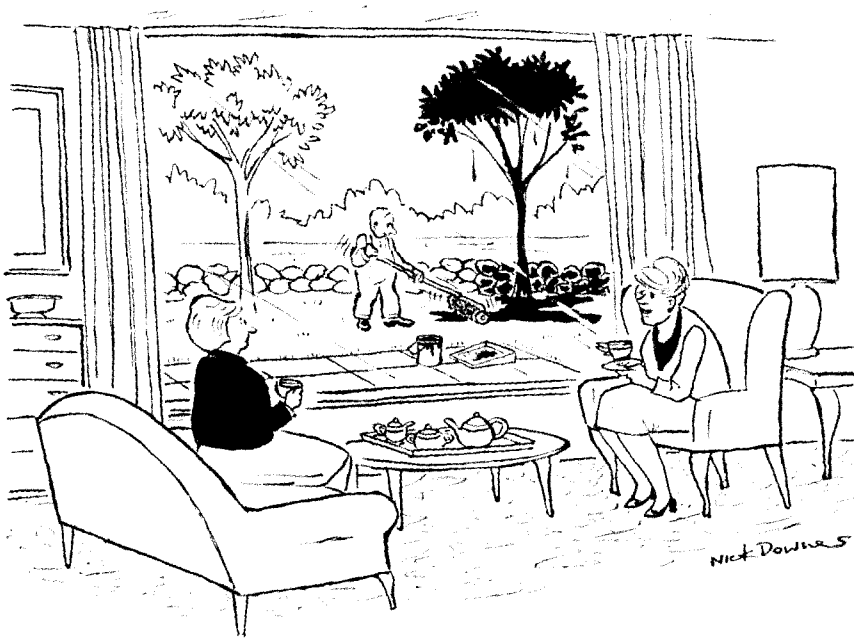

"Walter enjoys landscape painting."

Must Reading

The Bush presidency has been so eventful, it's easy to forget that its first major public-policy crisis involved biotechnology. Despite the heat it generated, that debate over federal funding for embryonic stem-cell research was actually only a skirmish in a much-larger struggle about the uses of modern science.

The biotechnologists—and the ideologues who support the unfettered crafting of a post-human future—have dominated academic and professional discourse on the topic. But now, reinforcements for those defending humankind have arrived, in the form of a new quarterly journal published by the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C. Called the *New Atlantis*, the journal is edited by WEEKLY STANDARD contributor Eric Cohen. Named after Francis Bacon's fable "of a society living with the benefits and challenges of advanced science and technology," it's dedicated to applying cogent intellectual analysis to the urgent bioethical issues of our time. (To subscribe, call 866-440-6916.)

The premier issue is top notch. The lead article, by Leon Kass, the chairman of the President's Council on Bioethics, explores "biotechnology and the pursuit of perfection." Other articles include "Does Bioethics Have a Future?"—together with "Liberty, Privacy, and DNA Databases" and "Military Technology and American Culture." The authors are the likes of Gilbert Meilaender, Christine Rosen, and Victor Davis Hanson.

The perspectives presented in the *New Atlantis* have, for far too long, received short shrift in the intellectual discourse that rages out of public view in professional and academic journals. But the authors and prose of the *New Atlantis* demonstrate conclusively that this imbalance has not been because the best thinkers and writers support the creation of the Brave New World of eugenic biotechnology, but because there have been too few outlets in which the intellectual countercurrent could be expressed.

Biotechnology should not be stopped. It must, however, be channeled. Establishing appropriate checks and balances over biotechnology will take intellectual rigor, hard work, and unceasing activism—and the *New Atlantis* is must reading for those who will play crucial parts in this endeavor.

—Wesley J. Smith

Books in Brief

***A French Country Murder* by Peter Steiner (St. Martin's Minotaur, 246 pp., $23.95).** Peter Steiner's first novel is very different from the satirical cartoons he draws for the WEEKLY STANDARD, the *New Yorker*, and the *Washington Times*. It's rather more like an oil painting, with multiple layers of color. The novel concerns its hero's ponderings on the meaning of life and his relationship with his estranged children as much as his effort finally to vanquish an old enemy.

As the book opens, Louis Morgon, a sixtyish American living in rural France, devotes his time to gardening and painting, leaving the "sordid world" of his mysteriously truncated career in the State Department behind. But when he finds a dead body at his front door, he reasons that his troubled past is coming back to haunt him.

A French Country Murder won't appeal to every reader. Some of the wild plot contrasts so much with the realistically drawn characters and milieu, they seem to belong in another book. Though the title suggests an Agatha Christie-style whodunit, the real genre is the thriller, but it's atypical there, too. A compulsive pigeonholer might call it an espionage cozy. If your preference runs to Ian Fleming, you probably won't like it. If John le Carré is more to your taste—in literary terms, not necessarily political—you probably will. If you relish a slow, atmospheric, flashback-filled build-up to a mystery that heats up in the second half, with genuine menace afoot but nearly all the actual violence performed off-stage, this certainly is your book.

—Jon L. Breen

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Parody

U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, with staff and reporters, in Rumsfeld's cavernous C-17 aircraft at Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia, April 29, 2003.

the weekly Standard
May 12, 2003

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The Social Studies Wars

Chester E. Finn Jr. is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution; chairman of Hoover's Koret Task Force on K–12 Education; and president of the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation.

The fracas over what to teach children about September 11, 2001, revealed a deep fault line within the school subject known as "social studies."

Put simply, one camp believes that social studies classes should help children feel good about themselves, be nice to others, and learn to respect all cultures, with minimal attention to traditional history, geography, and civics. The other camp holds that the schools' job is to transmit information to children about their shared American culture, how it works, and where it came from. Guess which side is winning?

The overwhelming majority of September 11 curricular guidance that teachers received from the National Council for the Social Studies, the National Association of School Psychologists, the National Education Association, and many others focused on pop psychotherapy. A year after the attacks, the underlying assumption in the renewed flood of instructional advice was still that children needed to be comforted, reassured, and admonished not to cast blame or show bias toward any group, religion, or country.

One found little in the curricular suggestions about who attacked us and why. There was even less about America's core values of freedom and equality and why the world's fanatics and fundamentalists abhor these. There was nothing about the difference between democracy and theocracy. Although New York's noble firefighters and police came in for some praise, little was made of the many acts of heroism on September 11 and nary a word about the brutal villains who killed thousands of innocents on that bright September morning. Nor were there lessons from history about how America responded on previous occasions when its principles have been challenged, its freedoms attacked, and its sovereignty assaulted.

Not surprisingly, "patriotism" was almost completely absent from these recommended lesson plans. One was more apt to find warnings against jingoism.

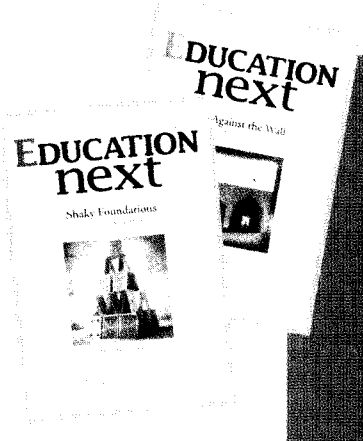
Many teachers sensibly ignored all this advice and did what they thought right. The youngsters I spoke to about September 11 reported that on the anniversary they wore something red, white, and blue to school, recited the Pledge of Allegiance, maybe spent a few minutes remembering the events of a year earlier, and (in private schools) said a prayer. That was about it. Then back to multiplication and division, verbs and nouns, whatever.

Perhaps an important "teachable moment" was thus wasted. But at least these teachers did not make matters worse on September 11. Yet the social studies curriculum for which they are responsible all year long, day in and day out, is far more apt to embrace the worldview of the National Council for the Social Studies than the priorities of patriotic Americans, as are the textbooks, the ed-school courses in which tomorrow's teachers are prepared, and their professional journals.

Social studies needs a top-to-bottom overhaul. We will do an important service to the memory of our heroes and those they left behind if, by September 11, 2003, this overhaul is well under way.

— *Chester E. Finn Jr.*

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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